NATION

Gangsters Bishnoi, Brar part ways

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

WPI inflation dips to 14-month low of 0.39%

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Women's ODI WC: India to face Pak on 5 Oct

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in www.magzter.com 17 JUNE 2025 | TUESDAY | BENGALURU | 20 DHU AL-HIJJAH, 1446 AH Vol 4 | Issue No 163 | Pages: 8

Now, UPI payments to take just 10 seconds

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

Starting 16 June, UPI transactions will be completed faster, with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) mandating reduced response times. Payments, status checks, and reversals must now be processed within 10 to 15 seconds, down from the earlier 30 seconds. Address validation during a transaction will also take just 10 seconds. The changes aim to improve the user experience. Additionally, users will now be limited to 50 account balance checks per day via UPI apps, introduced to ensure system efficiency. To boost customer confidence and reduce fraud, UPI apps must display only the actual beneficiary's name during transactions. Any feature allowing users to modify the beneficiary's name must be disabled. *—PTI*

Trump family to venture into mobile phones

NEW YORK, 16 JUNE

The US President Donald Trump family has announced plans to launch a mobile phone company, furthering a series of ventures during Donald Trump's presidency that have stirred ethical concerns regarding potential conflicts of interest. Eric Trump, one of the president's sons who will oversee the venture, stated that the company aims to manufacture its phones in the United States and operate a domestic call centre. This announcement follows a string of real estate dealings in the Middle East, including a golf resort project in Qatar unveiled in April, and a $1.5 billion partnership for golf courses and hotels in Vietnam. Last month, Trump publicly criticised Apple for planning to produce most of its US iPhones in India, threatening a 25 per cent tariff on the devices if they do not increase domestic manufacturing. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

'Innocent bystander' shot dead in US protest

SALT LAKE CITY, 16 JUNE

An "innocent bystander" at the "No Kings" demonstration in downtown Salt Lake City was shot and killed Saturday, police said. The gunman was brandishing a rifle at demonstrators. Police took the alleged rifleman, Arturo Gamboa, 24, into custody on Saturday evening on a murder charge, Salt Lake City Police Chief Brian Redd said at a Sunday news conference. The deceased was Arthur Folasa Ah Loo, 39. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

City Rapido driver slaps woman, says she hit him first

BENGALURU, 16 JUNE

A Rapido bike taxi rider has been booked for allegedly slapping a woman passenger following an argument over rash driving. The incident occurred on 13 June in Jayanagar and was caught on camera, showing the woman falling to the ground from the impact. The woman, a sales executive at a jewellery shop, had booked the ride to her workplace. According to police, she alighted mid-ride after reportedly objecting to the driver's rash behaviour and signal-jumping. An argument ensued, during which she allegedly refused to pay the fare or return the helmet. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

Indians evacuated as Israel, Iran conflict enters 4th day

Israel bombs Iran-run state TV during live broadcast

TEHRAN, TEL AVIV/ 16 JUNE

As the conflict between Israel and Iran rages on, Indian authorities have begun relocating citizens —primarily over 1,500 students, most from Jammu & Kashmir — to safer areas within Iran. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) confirmed on Monday that "other feasible options" for evacuation are under active consideration.

Responding to India's request, Iran has agreed to facilitate the evacuation of Indian nationals, including diplomats, via land borders, as Iranian airspace remains closed. Tehran has asked India to provide names, passport details, vehicle information, and border preferences for arranging safe passage.

The Indian Embassy in Tehran is in contact with stranded citizens and has advised against unnecessary travel.

Smoke rises from an oil storage facility after it was struck by an Israeli strike in Tehran, Iran

Khamenei hides in bunkers

After Israel killed Iranian intelligence Chief Brigadier General Mohammad Kazemi, his deputy Hassan Mohaqiq, and officer Mohsen Bagheri, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was reportedly moved to a secure bunker in Lavizan.

Israel reportedly refrained from targeting Khamenei on the first night of the operation to offer a last chance to halt Iran's uranium enrichment programme.

Meanwhile, the International Atomic Energy Agencywarned of potential radiological and chemical contamination at Iran's Natanz nuclear facility after Israeli airstrikes, though external radiation levels remain normal. An Israeli airstrike bombed Iran's state broadcaster during a live broadcast, with the anchor seen fleeing before defiantly returning on air, daring Israel to strike again.

India's neutral stance

India has distanced itself from the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's condemnation of Israel's attacks, signalling a potential rift within the bloc over the conflict. Domestically, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said the government will meet shipping firms and trade stakeholders this week to assess the impact on India's overseas trade.

India's exports to Israel fell from $4.5 billion in FY24 to $2.1 billion in FY25, while trade with Iran, exports at $1.4 billion and imports at $441 million, is also expected to suffer amid growing regional instability.

Pak shuts border

Pakistan has indefinitely shut all border crossings with Iran, evacuating hundreds of Pakistani students and pilgrims. Reports of Pakistan threatening Israel with nuclear retaliation were denied by its Defence Ministry. *—PTI*

Govt notifies ₹13,000 cr caste census for 2027

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

The Government of India on Monday issued a notification for the 16th national census, to be held in 2027—sixteen years after the last census in 2011. For the first time since Independence, this census will include caste enumeration.

The census will reference 1 March 2027 for most of the country, while in snow-bound regions such as Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and parts of Jammu & Kashmir, it will reference 1 October 2026.

Expected to cost over Rs 13,000 crore, the massive two-phase operation will involve around 34 lakh enumerators and supervisors, and 1.3 lakh census officials using digital devices. Citizens will be able to self-enumerate.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah reviewed the preparations with senior officials on Sunday. Training for field functionaries is set to begin in October 2025.

The census will begin with a House Listing Operation (HLO) assessing housing, assets and amenities, followed by Population Enumeration, collecting socio-economic and demographic data. Citizens will answer around 36 questions covering internet usage, vehicle ownership, cereals consumed, housing type, caste, and gender of the household head.

Data security measures will be stringent throughout collection, transmission, and storage.

The Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, approved caste enumeration in April 2024. This follows earlier unfulfilled promises, including the 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census, which was never fully published. Preparations had begun for the 2021 census but were halted due to Covid-19. The 2027 notification makes no mention of updating the National Population Register (NPR). *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with President of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides in Nicosia, Cyprus, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

India, Cyprus to deepen defence, security ties

NICOSIA, 16 JUNE

India and Cyprus on Monday agreed to deepen cooperation in defence and security, issuing a joint declaration that reaffirmed their shared commitment to fighting terrorism and hybrid threats.

Following wide-ranging talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides, Cyprus extended its "unwavering support" to India in combating cross-border terrorism. Both leaders unequivocally condemned terrorism and violent extremism in all forms, reiterating a zero-tolerance policy and insisting that perpetrators must be held accountable.

The declaration called for concerted global action against all UN-and EU-designated terrorists, entities, proxy groups, and sponsors—including those listed under the UN Security Council's 1267 Sanctions Committee. India and Cyprus also reiterated their determination to disrupt terrorist financing through cooperation with international bodies such as the UN and the Financial Action Task Force .

The two leaders stressed the need to bolster strategic autonomy, defence readiness, and capabilities in response to emerging global security challenges. Modi arrived in Cyprus on Sunday. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Modi gets Cyprus' highest civilian award

NICOSIA, 16 JUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III, Cyprus's highest civilian honour, during a ceremony on Monday. Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides presented the award.

Boeing joins AI crash probe; Cockpit voice recorder found

NEW DELHI/ AHMEDABAD, 16 JUNE

A team from Boeing and officials of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), on Monday, arrived in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, to inspect the site of the Air India plane crash.

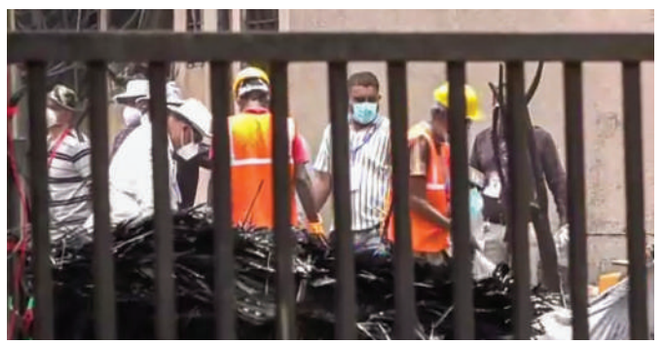
The United States' National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has launched a parallel probe into the Air India plane crash here, drawing several international experts to the accident site.

A high-level multi-disciplinary committee constituted by the government met on Monday to discuss the possible causes behind the Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad, the country's worst air disaster in decades. Chaired by Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, the panel is tasked with recommending preventive measures and drafting new standard operating procedures.

Meanwhile, investigators confirmed the recovery of the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR), a vital piece of evidence that, along with the previously retrieved Flight Data Recorder (FDR), will help determine the exact cause of the crash. The CVR was located shortly before Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, PK Mishra, visited the crash site on Sunday.

Mishra chaired a review meeting in Ahmedabad and visited the civil hospital to meet injured victims and bereaved families. He also reviewed DNA identification efforts at the Forensic Science Laboratory in Gandhinagar, stressing scientific accuracy and swift processing. The London-bound Air India Boeing 787-8 (AI 171) crashed shortly after take-off on 12 June, killing 270 people, including 241 on board and 29 on the ground. Only one passenger survived the tragedy. Investigations are ongoing with US safety authorities also involved. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3



Investigation underway at the site of the Air India plane crash, in Ahmedabad on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Tamil should be allowed in SC: MK Stalin

THANJAVUR, 16 JUNE

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has called for the inclusion of the Tamil language as a court language in the Supreme Court

Speaking at a wedding, he highlighted the historical significance of a reform initiated by the late Chief Minister CN Annadurai in 1967, which legalised self-respect marriages without ritualistic practices

Stalin praised Justices R Mahadevan and MM Sundresh for delivering speeches in Tamil and reiterated the long-standing demand to allow arguments in Tamil before the Supreme Court and the Madras High Court. He expressed satisfaction with the increasing availability of judgments in Tamil, noting that by 27 September, 2024, 2,559 Supreme Court judgments had been translated into Tamil, alongside 892 judgments from the Madras High Court.

The Chief Minister requested the judges' support for this cause, emphasising the importance of Tamil in the judiciary. *—PTI*

2 DEAD, RED ALERT ON AS RAINS BATTER K'TAKA

MANGALURU/UDUPI/ SHIVAMOGGA/ CHIKKAMAGALURU, 16 JUNE

A red alert has been issued for coastal Karnataka by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), prompting widespread school closures in five districts on Monday. Meanwhile, two people, including a 100-year-old woman, were killed in separate rain-related incidents in Shivamogga and Chikkamagaluru districts.

In Shivamogga, Siddamma, was killed in her sleep when a mud wall collapsed at a house she was visiting in Aadugudi village, under Mandagatti Gram Panchayat limits. The house, made of mud bricks and stone, reportedly became unstable after days of rain. Four others – Hemavati, Pallavi, Parushram, and Chetan – sustained injuries and were admitted to the government-run Meggan Hospital. Siddamma, originally from Konkammi village in Davangere district, had recently travelled to her relatives' home for a visit.

In Chikkamagaluru's NR Pura taluk, 55-year-old Anil Pias died after a massive tree fell on him while he was riding his motorcycle in the Elekat Ghat section. Anil was en route to Balehonnur when the incident occurred. PSI Raveesh S, who reached the scene, transported the critically injured man in a fire and emergency services vehicle, but he succumbed to head injuries. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

OLA, UBER AND RAPIDO HIT

HC takes bike taxis off Karnataka roads

BENGALURU, 16 JUNE

Bike taxi services operated by app-based aggregators came to a standstill in Karnataka on Monday, following the High Court's directive to suspend operations.

Complying with the order, bike taxi options were removed from ride-hailing apps such as Ola, Uber and Rapido.

Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy confirmed the development, saying that the companies must abide by the court's decision.

"Three months ago, the court ruled that bike taxis are illegal. It initially gave six weeks, and then another six weeks on request. Now that 12 weeks have passed, the aggregators must follow the High Court order," Reddy said.

On Friday, a division bench of the Karnataka High Court refused to stay an earlier single-judge order that suspended bike taxi services in the state. The division bench, comprising Acting Chief Justice V Kameshwar Rao and Justice Sreenivas Harish Kumar, was hearing appeals filed by Uber India Systems Pvt Ltd, ANI Technologies Pvt Ltd (which operates Ola) and Roppen Transportation Services Pvt Ltd (which operates Rapido), among others. The single judge had observed that such services cannot operate unless the state government notifies specific rules and guidelines under the Motor Vehicles Act.

The division bench noted that it would have considered granting a stay on the order if the state had indicated progress in drafting the rules. However, the government stated that it had taken a policy decision not to frame such regulations, leading the court to deny relief to the aggregators. *—PTI*

On Friday, the Karnataka High Court refused to stay an earlier single-judge order that suspended bike taxi services in the State **PHOTO: PTI**

Congress won't politicise plane crash, says DKS

BENGALURU, 16 JUNE

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar criticised the BJP and JD(S) for indulging in "politics over dead bodies" following the Ahmedabad plane crash. Speaking to the media at his Sadashivanagar residence, he said, "The Congress will not stoop so low. We won't politicise this tragedy." He described the crash as devastating, noting that "thousands could have died if the plane had gone 500 metres further." Several medical students lost their lives and many others were injured. A Congress delegation led by Mallikarjun Kharge visited the survivors. When asked about criticism of the Union Aviation Minister, DKS said, "This is a serious issue with technical aspects.—*ANI*

Brindavan Garden hotels adopt leopard, jaguar

MYSURU, 16 JUNE

General Managers Rishi, Suman Nannaiah, and Temjen AO of Royal Orchid Metropole and Royal Orchid Brindavan Garden have adopted an Indian leopard and a jaguar at Mysore Zoo for one year, contributing Rs 1 lakh. The cheque was handed to Zoo Executive Director K N Rangaswamy in the presence of IFS officer Kumar Pushkar, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Bengaluru. The adoption supports zoo conservation efforts, stated an official release. —*Salar News*

Two die in Kolar after consuming insecticide

KOLAR, 16 JUNE

Two labourers died after accidentally consuming water mixed with insecticide at a poultry farm in Guntapalli, under Royalpad police limits in Srinivasapur taluk, on Monday afternoon. The deceased have been identified as Devappa, 60, and Dasappa, 62, both residents of Guntapalli village. They were cleaning garbage at the poultry farm. Police said that after having food provided by the owner, the duo collected water in a bottle – reportedly containing leftover insecticide – and drank it. They soon began vomiting and complained of nausea. They were rushed to Srinivasapur hospital and later referred to Kolar for advanced treatment. However, both died en route. —*Salar New*

Wrestling revived in Mysuru

SE Sudheendra, Chairman, Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board, inaugurated the National Wrestling Competition at Sri Devaraja Urs Stadium, Mysuru, on Monday. He praised the revival of wrestling heritage and government support. Maharashtra's Vishal Segale won the Maharaja Yaduveer Wodeyar Cup. Nine women's teams participated. —*Salar New*

Socio-edu survey, caste census different: CM

Siddaramaiah says that without survey, it is difficult to implement welfare programmes

DAVANGERE, 16 JUNE

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday clarified that the state's upcoming socio-educational and caste survey is distinct from the Centre's proposed caste census, emphasising that the initiative is rooted in the principles of social justice.

Speaking to reporters in Davangere, Siddaramaiah said the Centre's caste census, scheduled to begin in 2027, does not encompass socio-educational parameters. "The Centre is doing a caste census. What we are doing is a socio-educational survey, under which caste enumeration will also come," he said.

The Chief Minister stressed that the State's initiative is broader in scope and intended to gather data necessary for designing effective welfare policies for backward and marginalised communities.

"For meaningful social justice, we must understand the socio-economic and educational status of the population. Without this, it is difficult to implement welfare programmes," Siddaramaiah said.

He dismissed suggestions that pressure from dominant communities had led to objections over the earlier survey, noting that concerns had emerged from various sections of society.

"It's been 10 years since the last survey. As per Section 11 of the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes Act, a new report is mandated every decade," he pointed out.

The state cabinet on 12 June approved the new survey, and Siddaramaiah has instructed the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes to begin work without delay.

The earlier 2015 caste census, undertaken by the Siddaramaiah-led government, was never officially released due to political controversy. The Congress high command has since urged the state to initiate fresh enumeration amid concerns over misrepresentation in the previous survey.

The announcement comes as caste-based data collection gains traction nationwide, with implications for social justice policymaking and resource allocation. —*PTI*

Siddaramaiah said the Centre's caste census, scheduled to begin in 2027, does not encompass socio-educational parameters **PHOTO: PTI**

BJP SAYS CONG ALWAYS BETRAYED OBCS

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

The BJP on Monday accused the Congress of betraying Other Backward Classes (OBCs), criticising the State government's decision to discard the previous caste census and initiate a fresh one.

Union Minister Bhupender Yadav questioned the Congress's intent, claiming the party's push for social justice was politically motivated. He said over 165 crore of public money was wasted on the earlier survey and demanded accountability. "Congress never had a genuine commitment to the OBC cause," Yadav stated, citing the party's historic opposition to the Kaka Kalelkar and Mandal Commission reports. He also criticised Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for admitting the fresh census was directed by the Congress high command, equating this to "remote control politics" reminiscent of the UPA era.

Yadav also targeted RJD leader Lalu Prasad over recent controversy involving a photo of BR Ambedkar placed near his feet, calling it a display of arrogance and a disregard for Dalit sentiment. —*PTI*

UPPER CASTES BLOCKING CASTE CENSUS FINDINGS: YATHINDRA

MYSURU, 16 JUNE

MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah on Monday alleged that upper castes are obstructing the release of Karnataka's caste census findings to prevent empowerment of Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

Speaking in Mandya, he said the census would have strengthened OBCs, including Vokkaligas and Lingayats, by enabling increased reservation and benefits.

He criticised the rejection of the decade-old report by the State Backward Classes Commission as "outdated" and "unscientific," blaming vested interests. While 10% EWS quota for upper castes faced no opposition, any move to raise OBC reservation is resisted, he noted.

A fresh caste survey will now be conducted within 90 days. —*Salar News*

MAN ARRESTED FOR GIRLFRIEND'S MURDER

GADAG, 16 JUNE

A 28-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly murdering his girlfriend and burying her body in a bid to destroy evidence, police said on Monday.

The incident, which occurred six months ago, came to light following a detailed investigation. The accused, Satish Hiremath, and the deceased, Madhushree Angadi, 26, both hailed from Narayanapura village in Gadag taluk, Karnataka. The two had been in a relationship for six years, but Madhushree's parents disapproved and sent her to live with relatives in Gadag.

On the night of 16 December, 2024, she left her relative's house and never returned. A missing person's report was filed on 12 January, 2025. Investigations revealed that Satish took Madhushree to a farmhouse near their village, where a heated argument erupted over her repeated demands for marriage. He allegedly strangled her with a veil and buried the body.

Satish returned to work at a petrol station and frequently visited the site to scatter the remains and avoid suspicion. A breakthrough came through mobile data, which showed Madhushree's phone location conflicted with Satish's claims.

During interrogation, Satish confessed and led police to the burial site. While skeletal remains have been recovered, Madhushree's skull is still missing. A forensic examination is ongoing.

Police have registered a murder case and are seeking Satish's custodial interrogation for further evidence collection. —*PTI*

Honey-trap racket busted; cop among five arrested

MYSURU, 16 JUNE

Periyapatna police have busted a honey-trapping and extortion racket involving a head constable and four others, including a woman, who allegedly targeted a local businessman.

The arrested include Head Constable Shivanna alias Papanna of Hunsur Rural Police Station, and Murthy alias Makanahalli Dasa Bhovi of Periyapatna taluk, identified as the prime accused. A 23-year-old woman and two others were also taken into custody.

According to police, the woman befriended cloth merchant Dineshkumar of Kampalapura town after visiting his shop on 11 June. The two exchanged phone numbers and continued communicating. On 14 June, the woman lured Dineshkumar to a secluded house near Maradiyur on Bylakuppe Road.

While inside, three men, including Murthy, barged in and photographed the businessman in a compromising position with the woman. They threatened to leak the photos on social media and demanded 10 lakh. The gang instructed Dineshkumar to hand over the money to Constable Shivanna.

Instead, Dineshkumar's brother Mahendra Chowdhary, who was asked to bring the money, alerted Periyapatna Police. Acting swiftly, Inspector Raveesh and his team conducted a detailed investigation, leading to the arrests.

A case has been registered at Bettadapura Police Station, and further investigation is underway. Police say the racket may have targeted other businessmen using similar tactics.

The arrest of a police officer shocked the local community and raised concerns about the involvement of law enforcement in criminal networks. Authorities have assured strict action against all those involved. —*Salar News*

Deluge forces admin to shut schools, clamp travel curbs

MANGALURU/UDUPI/ SHIVAMOGGA/ CHIKKAMAGALURU, 16 JUNE

Vehicles pass by boulders brought down in a landslide near to National Highway 169 near Kettikallu, near Mangaluru, on Sunday **PHOTO: PTI**

Karnataka's coastal and Malnad districts continue to reel under intense monsoon showers, prompting widespread disruptions. In Uttara Kannada, the district administration has imposed movement restrictions on the landslide-prone Sirsi–Kumta route from 6 PM to 6 AM following multiple recent incidents. The Devimane stretch has been flagged as highly vulnerable, with geological experts warning of heavily saturated soil that may give way anytime.

This marks the fourth consecutive day that the academic calendar has been disrupted. All educational institutions up to degree level remain shut in several districts, with officials advising caution on reopening.

In Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, Deputy Commissioners Mullai Muhilan and Dr. K. Vidyakumari respectively declared holidays for all institutions—from Anganwadis to high schools—citing persistent downpours, waterlogging, and potential landslides. Disaster response units have been placed on high alert. The IMD has forecast extremely heavy rainfall in isolated pockets, leading officials to urge the public to remain indoors during peak rain hours.

In Chikkamagaluru, Deputy Commissioner Meena Nagaraj initially announced school closures for six taluks—Chikkamagaluru, Kalasa, Mudigere, Shringeri, Koppa, and NR Pura—before extending the order district-wide. Similarly, Dakshina Kannada authorities, who first declared closures in Mangaluru, Ullal, Bantwal, Mulki, and Moodbidri, expanded the order across the district on Monday. Kodagu and parts of Uttara Kannada have implemented similar shutdowns. —*Salar News*

SPECIAL TEAM TO PROBE THEFT

Gang of four smudge CCTV cam with pepper spray, steal ₹27L from ATM

KOLAR, 16 JUNE

Unidentified miscreants looted over Rs 27 lakh from an ATM near Sarige Nagar under Gulpet police limits in the early hours of Monday.

According to police, a gang of four to five arrived in a car around 4:30am. They sprayed pepper spray on the ATM's CCTV camera and one person, covering himself with a bedsheet, gained entry into the booth. Using a grass cutter, they cut open the ATM and decamped with the cash.

The visuals from the CCTV cameras were blurred due to the spray, leaving investigators with little to identify the suspects. The car's number plate was also not clearly visible.

Kolar Superintendent of Police B Nikhil, who visited the scene, said a special team would be formed to track down the culprits and expressed confidence in their swift arrest. The Gulpet police have registered a case based on a complaint by ATM Channel Executive Ramanjalu and are continuing investigations. —*Salar News*

Kannada activists protest KRS plan, AP mango ban

MYSURU, 16 JUNE

Activists led by Kannada Chaluvali Vatal party leader Vatal Nagaraj organised a protest in Mysuru's Hardinge Circle on Monday against the state government's plans to establish an amusement park at Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) reservoir, as well as conducting Cauvery Arathi and several other activities to promote tourism at the dam. Nagaraj also condemned the Andhra Pradesh government restrictions on sending Totapuri variety mangoes from Karnataka to AP's Chittoor district for processing.

The protesters urged AP Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu to withdraw his ban on Totapuri mangoes, saying that his order is against the spirit of federalism.

Farmers in the border district rely heavily on Chittor-based pulp extraction units to process their produce. The decision will affect mango growers of the border district. Kannada activists will block the interstate check posts if Naidu does not reconsider its ban on Totapuri mangoes, Nagaraj said. —*Salar News*

FIGHT FOR RIGHTS

Members of Domestic Workers Rights Union protest, demanding the ratification of C189 convention to facilitate the enactment of national legislation, at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Monday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

RESISTING RASH DRIVING

Rapido rider slaps woman client; booked

BENGALURU, 16 JUNE

A Rapido bike taxi rider has been booked for allegedly slapping a woman passenger following an argument over rash driving. The incident occurred on 13 June in Jayanagar and was caught on camera, showing the woman falling to the ground from the impact.

The woman, a sales executive at a jewellery shop, had booked the ride to her workplace. According to police, she alighted mid-ride after reportedly objecting to the driver's rash behaviour and signal-jumping.

An argument ensued, during which she allegedly refused to pay the fare or return the helmet.

The rider, Suhas, allegedly slapped her and told her to "go back to your country." He later admitted to making the comment but claimed the woman had abused him and grabbed his collar. "She asked me to stop in the middle of the road. I told her it wasn't safe, but she continued yelling and hit me twice," Suhas said.

- The woman, a sales executive at a jewellery shop, had booked the ride to her workplace. According to police, she alighted mid-ride after reportedly objecting to the driver's rash behaviour and signal-jumping

A purported video grab of the woman falling down on being hit by the rider **PHOTO: SALAR**

"She abused me and asked if I was educated or not... She continued to be rude to me... I asked her about the payment, but she kept abusing me. She grabbed my collar."

"I told her she doesn't have the right to get physical, she then hit me twice with a tiffin box, that's when I hit her back. I told her people were watching. But she kept raising her voice, Suman added.

Despite initially refusing to lodge a complaint, the woman was later persuaded by police, who registered a case on Monday after filing a Non-Cognisable Report (NCR) and issuing a formal notice to her.

The woman later told that the driver was not following the traffic rules. "Secondly, he should not have attacked me. I did the payment and gave the helmet," she added.

A senior officer from Jayanagar Police Station confirmed that a case has now been registered against the rider. Further investigation is underway. —*PTI*

BJP LEADER SAYS SORRY FOR HATE SPEECH

KALABURAGI, 16 JUNE

BJP leader Manikanth Rathod has issued an apology following backlash over his recent hate speech, saying, "If my statement has hurt the Muslim community, I apologise." In a video posted on Facebook, he clarified that his earlier remarks about "cleansing love jihad" were misinterpreted and that he did not call for violence against Muslims. Rathod alleged that Congress leader Priyank Kharge had distorted his comments to fuel communal tensions.

"I have never spoken against Islam," he stated, reiterating that his comments were targeted at "love jihad," not Muslims. "Ahimsa Paramo Dharma is what I believe in," he added. —*Salar News*

Endless wait for kin of crash victims

Over 119 victims; officials hope to complete DNA profiling by Tuesday-Wednesday

AHMEDABAD, 16 JUNE

Amid the trauma of losing their loved ones, it is a long wait for the families of several victims of the Air India plane crash as they continue to camp here for four days in the hope of getting the mortal remains of their kin.

They were among the first ones to submit their samples for DNA tests on 12 June, the day the horrific incident occurred, so that they could be matched with the deceased.

They were asked to wait for 72 hours, but the deadline got over on Sunday and the wait seems endless. Health authorities here have asked the distraught family members not to panic, while experts said the DNA samples matching could take time, given large number of fatalities in the crash.

"We visited the DNA collection centre yesterday but were told that our samples were yet to be matched," Pooja Sukhadare, a relative of crew member Roshni Songhare, told PTI on Monday.

Similar is the case for crew member Maithili Patil's relatives, who are residents of Nhava in Navi Mumbai and arrived here on 12 June after the accident.

Relatives of Anil Khimani, 32, who did masonry and carpentry work in Gujarat's Kutch and was on board the ill-fated flight, have also been camping in Ahmedabad following the incident.

Since the plane crashed on 12 June, his father is here, said Mansukh, who identified himself as a relative of Khimani. His father gave his sample for DNA matching on 12 June.

Even the family of Akash Patni, 15, is waiting the body.

Rakesh Mishra, former director of the Hyderabad-based Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, told PTI that DNA matching is not a tedious task but in the case of this accident the number of deceased is large.

People wait outside of a hospital mortuary for the bodies of their loved ones who died in the Air India plane crash, in Ahmedabad, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Four days after the horrific crash of an Air India plane claimed 270 lives, 119 victims have so far been identified through DNA matching and 76 bodies, including that of former Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani, were handed over to their families, officials said on Monday.

An official expressed hope that the DNA profiling all the victims will be completed by either Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning. *—PTI*

Filmmaker missing; kin's fear grows

AHMEDABAD, 16 JUNE

The family of a missing filmmaker, Mahesh Kalawadia, also known as Mahesh Jirawala, has provided DNA samples as fears grow that he may be among the victims of the recent Air India plane crash. The aircraft crashed into a medical college campus shortly after takeoff from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport on 12 June, resulting in 241 fatalities on board and 29 on the ground. His wife, Hetal, reported that Mahesh last contacted her at 1.14pm, just before his mobile phone was traced to a location 700 metres from the crash site at 1.40pm. Authorities have confirmed the identification of 47 victims so far. *—PTI*

Mahesh Jirawal **PHOTO: X**

AI halts full-service carrier at Imphal

Imphal, 16 June

Air India has discontinued the operation of its full-service carrier at the Imphal International Airport from 15 June, but the airline's low-cost subsidiary AI Express will continue services here, AAI officials said on Monday. The decision was part of the airline's "long-standing and pre-planned" strategy, they said. Air India authorities could not be contacted for comment. It has a cherished history in region, connecting Imphal to major cities across country, officials said. *—PTI*

SMOKE DETECTED ON HAJJ LUCKNOW FLIGHT

LUCKNOW, 16 JUNE

A Saudia Airlines flight carrying 242 Haj pilgrims from Jeddah to Lucknow encountered an emergency on Sunday when smoke was detected from the aircraft's wheels during landing. The incident occurred at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport, where all passengers were safely evacuated with no damage reported to the aircraft. Emergency services were promptly deployed to contain the situation, ensuring the safety of the pilgrims. "The Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting team worked swiftly, averting potential damage," airport sources disclosed. The flight is set to return empty to Jeddah today. No disruption to airport operations was reported, as all procedures were followed accordingly. *—PTI*

FLIGHT DIVERTED OVER BOMB THREAT

MUMBAI/HYDERABAD, 16 JUNE

A Lufthansa flight from Frankfurt to Hyderabad was diverted back to its point of origin after a bomb threat was reported via social media on Sunday. Flight LH 752, operated by a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, had departed at 2.29pm, delayed from its scheduled 1.05pm departure. Airport authorities in Hyderabad received the bomb threat email at 6.01pm and enacted standard safety protocols, forming a threat assessment committee. "In the interest of safety, the airline was advised to return," a statement from the airport revealed. The aircraft was expected to land in Hyderabad at 01.20am. Further investigations are ongoing. *—PTI*

VIJAYBHAI'S LAST JOURNEY

Police personnel carry the mortal remains of former Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani, who died in the Air India plane crash, for a wreath-laying ceremony outside the mortuary of a hospital in Ahmedabad, on Monday. Lovingly called Vijaybhai, 68-year-old Rupani, who was the chief minister from August 2016 to September 2021, steered Gujarat through a critical post-Covid recovery phase **PHOTO: PTI**

AI FLIGHT RETURNS TO HONG KONG AFTER TECHNICAL ISSUE

HONG KONG, 16 JUNE

An Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, flight AI 315, made an unscheduled return to Hong Kong shortly after takeoff on Monday due to a suspected technical issue. Departing at 12.16pm local time, the flight was scheduled to arrive in Delhi at 12.20pm IST, but returned to Hong Kong just an hour later. All passengers were safely disembarked, and the aircraft is currently undergoing inspection. "We are providing necessary assistance to minimise inconvenience," said an Air India spokesperson. The Airport Authority of Hong Kong confirmed a local standby request during the incident, adding that airport operations remained unaffected. This incident follows a recent tragic crash involving another Air India Dreamliner which resulted in over 270 fatalities. *—PTI*

STALIN ANNOUNCES RS 8K AID TO TAMIL FAMILIES IN CAMP

CHENNAI, 16 JUNE

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Monday announced a one-time financial assistance of Rs 8,000 to Jangpura-Madrasi camp Tamil families of Delhi who have lost their houses.

Also, Stalin announced Rs 4,000 worth pack of essential commodities including rice, wheat, sugar and cooking oil to each of the over 300 affected Tamil families.

As many as 370 Tamil families, who resided in Madrasi camp were affected as their tenements were demolished following a court order.

The Chief Minister has ordered release of Rs 50 lakh from the CM's Public Relief Fund for the initiative to benefit the Delhi based affected Tamil families, an official release here said.

Days ago, Stalin wrote to his Delhi counterpart Rekha Gupta, seeking her government's support for the displaced Madrasi camp Tamil families. *—PTI*

Cyprus extends support to India

NICOSIA/CALGARY, 16 JUNE

A joint declaration issued after wide-ranging talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides said the two sides "reaffirmed their shared commitment to countering hybrid threats that undermine peace and stability".

"Cyprus expressed solidarity and unwavering support to India in its fight against cross-border terrorism. The two leaders strongly condemned the gruesome killing of civilians in the recent heinous terrorist attacks in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir, India," the declaration said.

It said the two leaders urged all States to respect the sovereignty of other nations and condemned cross-border terrorism in all its forms.

Emphasising the need for a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustained approach to combatting terrorism across borders, the two leaders underscored the importance of working collaboratively, bilaterally and with the multilateral system, the declaration said. This is his first foreign visit since India carried out Operation Sindoor.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Cyprus' highest civilian honour marking it as a 'proud moment for India' and said no other PM in the country's history has ever commanded such a "decisive influence" on the global stage as him. Cyprus' highest honour, the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III which is the senior order of knighthood awarded by the country. This is the 23rd such international honour **PHOTO: PTI**

The two leaders stressed the importance of enhancing strategic autonomy, defence readiness, and defence capabilities in the wake of emerging challenges within the international security environment.

Modi's visit to Cyprus is the first by an Indian Prime Minister in over two decades.

At a business roundtable in Limassol, Modi underscored India's rapid economic transformation over the past decade. He said India will soon become the world's third-largest economy, driven by reforms such as the Goods and Services Tax, corporate tax rationalisation, and improved ease of doing business.

He invited Cypriot companies to invest in India's emerging sectors like AI, digital payments, green energy, semiconductors, and tourism. Key agreements included an MoU between GIFT City's NSE International Exchange and the Cyprus Stock Exchange, and a deal between NPCI International and Eurobank Cyprus to enable UPI-based cross-border payments.

Modi also welcomed the launch of the India–Greece–Cyprus Business and Investment Council to boost trilateral cooperation.

From Cyprus, Modi travelled to Canada to attend the G7 Summit in Kananaskis, at the invitation of Canadian PM Mark Carney, signalling efforts to reset strained India–Canada ties. The summit will address key global issues including energy security, AI and quantum technologies, and geopolitical conflicts.

Modi's participation marks his sixth consecutive G7 appearance, reaffirming India's growing role in shaping global dialogue and cooperation. *—PTI*

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a meeting, in Marseille, France on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Jaishankar talks on West Asia tensions

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday held separate telephone conversations with the Foreign Ministers of the UAE and Armenia amid mounting tensions in West Asia following Israeli airstrikes on Iranian targets.

In a post on X, Jaishankar said he spoke with UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan on the current situation in the region, highlighting the role of diplomacy.

"Had a telecon with DPM & FM @ABZayed of UAE on the current situation in West Asia and the role of diplomacy. Agreed to remain in touch," he posted.

In another update, Jaishankar said he had a conversation with Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan to discuss regional developments and ongoing bilateral cooperation.

The outreach comes in the wake of heightened military activity in the region.

On Friday, Israel reportedly targeted Iran's nuclear and military facilities, triggering a response from Tehran.

India expressed deep concern over the developments and urged both nations to avoid escalation.

He also spoke separately with his Israeli and Iranian counterparts on Friday to assess the situation and reiterate India's position. *—PTI*

Bhutto urges India to return to negotiating

ISLAMABAD, 16 JUNE

- The composite dialogue process — first initiated in 2003 under General Pervez Musharraf — has been stalled since the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has urged India to return to the negotiating table, stating that all unresolved issues between the two nations can only be settled through comprehensive dialogue. Speaking to German broadcaster DW Urdu during a visit to Brussels, Bilawal warned that any Indian attempt to block Pakistan's water supply would be seen as an existential threat, leaving Pakistan with no option but to respond with force.

He called on the international community to play a constructive role in ensuring lasting peace in South Asia, including the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, water sharing issues, and terrorism, through structured talks. While reiterating that Pakistan does not seek war, Bilawal emphasised that Islamabad would not compromise on national security or its water rights.

India, however, insists it will only engage on the matter of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and cross-border terrorism.

The composite dialogue process — first initiated in 2003 under General Pervez Musharraf — has been stalled since the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Tensions escalated following the April Pahalgam terror attack.

Military exchanges ended on 10 May after a mutual understanding was reached between both sides' military leadership. *—PTI*

WEIGHT OF WAR

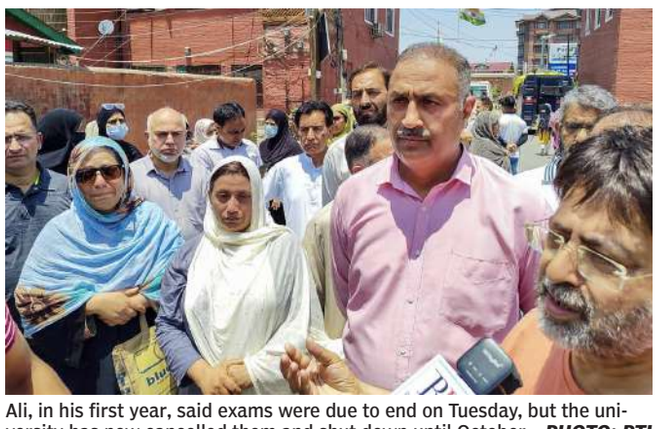
Worry engulfs kin of Kashmiri student studying in Iran

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

Faizan Ali, a 21-year-old medical student from Srinagar studying at Kerman University of Medical Sciences in Iran, says he has never received so many calls from his family as he does now.

Speaking to PTI via WhatsApp, Ali said his family are deeply worried following Israel's recent attack on Iran. "I've been in boarding school since Year 7 and never spoke to them daily. But now they call 10 times a day asking if I'm safe," he said.

Ali, in his first year, said exams were due to end on Tuesday, but the university has now cancelled them and shut down until October. "We've been told we can return home. There are over 120 students from Kashmir here. Our area is safer, but Tehran has been devastated," he said.



Ali, in his first year, said exams were due to end on Tuesday, but the university has now cancelled them and shut down until October **PHOTO: PTI**

He described how calm turned to chaos overnight, with gunshots heard and students in Tehran terrified. Internet disruption has made communication slow. "My reply to my father took 30 minutes to deliver," he said.

India has advised its citizens in Iran to remain cautious. Efforts are underway to ensure the students' safe return. *—PTI*

SC junks Samajwadi Party's plea, asks it to move HC

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea of the Samajwadi Party against a decision restraining its Pilibhit district president from filing a fresh petition after it was asked to vacate its local party office.

A bench of Justices Sandeep Mehta and PB Varale, however, allowed the political party to approach the Allahabad High Court over the matter.

The top court noted a 998-day delay in filing appeal against 1 December, 2020 order of the HC on plea of one Anand Singh Yadav who claimed to be party's district President. The bench observed the party had withdrawn its plea from the HC, but Yadav was restrained from filing any fresh plea on the issue.

According to the party's appeal, Yadav filed plea before the high court alleging eviction order passed by the Nagar Palika Parishad of Pilibhit, from the party's district office.

HC, it said, refused to entertain writ petition and refrained Yadav from filing petitions before HC. *—PTI*

UP man arrested for offensive Ram video

SONBHADRA, 16 JUNE

A 22-year-old man has been arrested in Uttar Pradesh's Sonbhadra district for allegedly sharing an objectionable video about Lord Ram on social media, police said on Monday. According to Circle Officer (Obra) Harsh Pandey, a complaint was received on Sunday against Suraj Jatav, a local resident, for uploading a video and comments on Instagram that were allegedly offensive to Lord Ram and Hinduism. The post was deemed capable of hurting religious sentiments and disturbing communal harmony, the officer stated. "Such actions could have posed a threat to public peace," Pandey added. A case has been filed for promoting enmity and hurting religious feelings. Jatav was arrested on Monday. *—PTI*

UP man kisses snake for reel; tongue bitten

MORADABAD, 16 JUNE

A 50-year-old man from Haibatpur village in Uttar Pradesh's Amroha district was bitten by a snake on the tongue while he attempted to kiss it for a social media video. Jitendra Kumar, a marginal farmer, had reportedly rescued the snake and, under the influence of intoxicants, decided to film a dramatic reel. In a widely circulated video, Kumar is seen wrapping the snake around his neck before bringing its head close to his mouth. As he extended his tongue towards it, the snake bit him, shocking onlookers. He was first taken to a nearby hospital and later referred to a private facility in Moradabad, where he remains critical. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

KT Rama Rao appears before ACB in Formula E case

HYDERABAD, 16 JUNE

KT Rama Rao, Bharat Rashtra Samithi's (BRS) working president, appeared before Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Monday as part of an ongoing investigation into the Formula E race case. Rama Rao asserted that the inquiry was a case of "political harassment," claiming that the Congress government attempted to divert attention from its failure in delivering election promises. This investigation is linked to allegations of unauthorised payments made in foreign currency for the hosting of the race in Hyderabad in February 2023 under the previous BRS administration. The event was subsequently cancelled. Rama Rao, who served as the Municipal Administration Minister during that time, expressed confidence that truth would ultimately prevail. *—PTI*

T'gana Cong Chief to testify in phone tapping case

HYDERABAD, 16 JUNE

Telangana Congress President B Mahesh Kumar Goud is expected to testify before police on Tuesday as a witness in the alleged illegal phone tapping case linked to the previous BRS regime. Congress sources say the Jubilee Hills ACP has summoned Goud, who served as the party's working president during the November 2023 Assembly polls and was reportedly among those targeted. Authorities are questioning former Special Intelligence Bureau (SIB) chief T Prabhakar Rao, accused of forming a secret operations unit under a suspended DSP to conduct political surveillance. Four police officers were arrested for allegedly destroying data and tapping phones illegally. They are accused of profiling individuals without authorisation and erasing intelligence records to cover up their actions. All were later granted bail. *—PTI*

Police personnel inspect after a portion of Babasaheb Jaykar Marg caved in causing the rear wheel of a BEST bus to get stuck, in Mumbai, A man shows a portion of a house that caved in due to heavy rainfall in Thiruvananthapuram **PHOTO: PTI**

Maharashtra saw 18 deaths due to rains in June

Heavy rains disrupt normal life in Kerala's northern districts

MUMBAI/ T'PURAM/ GONDA, 16 JUNE

18 persons have died and 65 suffered injuries due to rain-related incidents in Maharashtra since 1 June.

The deaths were reported in various incidents triggered by heavy rains, including road accidents, fall from bridges, drowning, lightning strikes and fire.

"18 persons have died in rain-related incidents in the state since 1 June," a state disaster management authority report said.

The south-west monsoon actively caused heavy showers in the state, especially in Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg and Raigad in the last 24 hours.

Incessant rains lashed Mumbai on Monday morning, inundating low-lying areas and disrupting road traffic, suburban trains and metro rail services.

Heavy rainfall may occur at a few places in the city and suburbs in the next 24 hours.

Incessant monsoon rains continued to wreak havoc in Kerala's northern districts on Monday, disrupting normal life, including road and rail traffic.

Several residents were evacuated to relief camps in Kannur and Kasaragod districts. Major rivers, including Thejaswini Puzha are in spate.

Heavy rainfall caused significant delays in rail traffic across the state.

Moderate rainfall with gusty wind may occur in Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragod districts in the coming hours.

Meanwhile, two persons were killed after being struck by lightning in the Sardar tehsil area in Uttar Pradesh's Gonda district on Monday morning.

In the first incident, Kunal Sharma, 20, a resident of Dattnagar Bisen was struck by lightning. His family members rushed him to the Gonda Medical College, where doctors declared him dead.

In the second incident, Ramdev Yadav, 46, a resident of Qazidevar village, was struck by lightning and died on the spot.

Ex gratia compensation will be provided to the families of the deceased as per government guidelines. *—PTI*

Collector had declared Pune river bridge dangerous

PALGHAR/PUNE, 16 JUNE

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said the iron pedestrian bridge on the Indrayani River in Pune that collapsed, killing four persons, had been declared dangerous by the district collector, with warning boards being put up at the site.

Fadnavis said this while participating in an event to welcome students on the first day of the new academic year at the Zilla Parishad school in Durvesh.

He said the work for building a new bridge at the site has begun.

Four people died and 18 were seriously injured when a 32-year-old iron pedestrian bridge over the Indrayani River in Maval tehsil collapsed on 15 June due to overcrowding by tourists.

The district collector had declared the bridge as dangerous before the incident, with villagers installing warning boards.

The administration identified 500 dangerous locations, including bridges and water bodies, across Pune.

Fadnavis instructed the district collector to implement safety measures at these vulnerable tourist spots.

Police on Monday continued the search operation at the site even as the National Disaster Response Force called off its efforts as all missing persons were accounted for.A committee will probe the incident. *—PTI*

People stand near an iron bridge over the Indrayani river after it collapsed in Pune in Maharashtra on 15 June **PHOTO:PTI**

NDRF personnel at the spot of a helicopter crash in Rudraprayag district, Uttarakhand on 15 June. Seven people died in the incident **PHOTO: PTI**

Chopper firm booked for U'khand crash

DEHRADUN, 16 JUNE

A case has been registered against Aryan Aviation Private Ltd for alleged negligence in connection with the helicopter crash near Kedarnath on Sunday that claimed the lives of all seven people on board, including a two-year-old child and the pilot.

The Bell 407 helicopter, operated by Aryan Aviation, went down in the Gauri Mai Khark Forest area between Gaurikund and Triyuginarayan, reportedly due to poor weather conditions.

According to the police, a case has been filed at Sonprayag police station against the company's accountable manager, Kaushik Pathak, and manager, Vikas Tomar, under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Section 10 of the Aircraft Act, 1934.

The FIR was lodged following a complaint by Sub-Inspector Rajiv Nakholia of the Revenue Police, stationed at Phata. The complaint alleges that the helicopter took off at 5.30am—prior to its scheduled flight window of 6am to 7am—without assessing prevailing weather conditions, despite cloudy skies and dense fog.

The company disregarded standard operating procedures issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and the Uttarakhand Civil Aviation Development Authority. The managers were aware of such negligence endangering lives and yet permitted the flight. *—PTI*

Gangsters Bishnoi, Brar part ways

MUMBAI, 16 JUNE

Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar, two notorious gangsters, are no longer working together, a media report said. While Bishnoi is allegedly operating from the Sabarmati jail in Gujarat's, Brar is believed to be operating from the US, the report said.

It is believed that the separation took place because of Bishnoi's displeasure about Brar and Sachin Godara over their handling of his brother Anmol's case in the US.

" Brar and Godara did not help Anmol file the required bail bond. Anmol was later released but with an ankle bracelet tracker," the report said, quoting sources.

"Goldy has started working with Azerbaijan-based Rohit Godara, while Bishnoi is now associated with Canada-based Noni Rana. This feud and their new syndicates are now a source of increasing tension for state police forces," the media report quoted an official as saying.

The matter was recently discussed in a recent National Investigation Agency (NIA) meeting attended by senior police officers from Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi, it said.

Bishnoi came into the limelight after his connection was established in multiple threats made to the actor Salman Khan. *—Agencies*

Lawrence Bishnoi (left) and Goldy Brar (right) **PHOTO: ANI**

An Indian Coast Guard ship carries out the firefighting operation after a fire broke out on a Singapore-flagged ship following an explosion off the Kerala coast **PHOTO: PTI**

BURNING CARGO SHIP'S DEBRIS REACHES KERALA

ALAPPUZHA, 16 JUNE

An empty container and a lifeboat from the fire-stricken Singapore-flagged cargo ship MV Wan Hai 503 washed ashore near Kakkazhom in Kerala's Alappuzha district on Monday.

The State Disaster Management Authority and the shipping company have been informed, and a salvage team will remove the debris.

Additional containers may wash up along the Alappuzha and Ernakulam coasts on 17 and 18 June.

The vessel, currently about 45 nautical miles from the coast, is being towed by professional salvors. Small fires are still visible in two or three spots, with smoke continuing to rise. *—PTI*

WEAPON USED IN RAJA RAGHUVANSHI MURDER FOUND

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

The police have released a picture of the weapon used in killing Indore-based businessman Raja Raghuvanshi, while he was on his honeymoon in Meghalaya.

Interrogations revealed that Vishal Chauhan allegedly first attacked Raja with the machete. Raja was attacked repeatedly, even as he struggled to save himself.

The accused had reportedly bought the machete from near Guwahati's railway station.

A video shot by Dev Singh, a tourist "accidentally" captured Sonam, the prime accused, leading the way up a hill, with Raja following her.

The video, later posted on Instagram, was recorded on 23 May, the day Raja was killed and his body dumped in a gorge.

In the video Sonam was seen wearing a white t-shirt, which was later found.*—PTI*

A video shot by a tourist 'accidentally' captured the Raghuvanshis climbing the hill on 23 May **PHOTO: X**

EVICTION DRIVE

Demolition drive in Assam, Delhi leaves thousands homeless

GOALPARA/NEW DELHI/ SAMBHAL, 16 JUNE

The Assam government on Monday launched an eviction drive in Hasilabeel village in Goalpara district to clear alleged encroachment by 667 families, mostly from the migrant Bengali-speaking community.

The eviction was carried out in 45 per cent of 1,555 bighas, while the remaining area is a water body.

Five lower primary schools in the village will be demolished.

The villagers failed to comply with eviction notices served to them in 2023 and 2024, said officials.

Many residents left the village with their belongings, while the remaining families have requested the district administration to rehabilitate them.

''I and my father were born here. My grandfather settled here when Jogighopa bridge was being constructed. We requested the authorities to provide us with an alternative place to stay'', a local resident said.

Authorities on Monday launched demolition drives in Jailorwala Bagh in Ashok Vihar in northwest Delhi and near a railway line in Wazirpur in north Delhi amid heavy police deployment.

A Special Task Force team carried out the demolition drive in Jailorwala Bagh area in Ashok Vihar with excavators.

Over 200 homes encroaching upon government land are to be demolished, the officials said.

District authorities are preparing to remove encroachments, including an illegal mosque and 33 houses, constructed on municipal land in the Waris Nagar area of Chandausi in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal district.

Six and a half bighas of land belonging to the Chandausi Nagar Palika Parishad, where the structures were built, was illegally occupied.

The matter came to light during a public grievance redressal programme held in March. The tehsil administration to conduct a detailed inquiry and notices were issued for the removal of the illegal structures. *—PTI*

A backhoe loader in action on Hasila village in Assam's Goalpar **PHOTO: X**

- Many residents left the village with their belongings, while the remaining families have requested the district administration to rehabilitate them.

AMITABH KANT STEPS DOWN AS G20 SHERPA

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

Amitabh Kant, who has had a distinguished 45-year career in government service, has stepped down from his position as India's G20 Sherpa. The retired 1980-batch Indian Administrative Service officer had been appointed to this role in July 2022, shortly before India assumed the G20 Presidency.

In a LinkedIn post titled 'My New Journey', Kant expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister of India for accepting his resignation and allowing him to lead national developmental initiatives. He described his tenure as G20 Sherpa as a significant milestone, highlighting India's successful presidency in 2023, which focused on inclusive development and crucial issues such as digital public infrastructure and climate finance.

Kant previously served as CEO of NITI Aayog from 2016 to 2022, spearheading programmes that improved socio-economic indicators in India's most backward districts by fostering a digital revolution. He also played a vital role in the 'Incredible India' campaign and now wants to support India's journey towards a developed nati on. *—PTI*

BJP calls Bengali speakers Bangladeshis, says Mamata

KOLKATA, 16 JUNE

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of labelling Bengali-speaking Indian citizens as illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, even if they possess valid identification documents. During the Assembly's question hour, Banerjee condemned the BJP for "unjust witch-hunt" against Bengali speakers in states governed by the party.

"One must be ashamed to brand Indian citizens as Bangladeshis based solely on their language," she stated. Banerjee criticised the BJP for depriving these individuals of their livelihood.

Banerjee asserted her government's commitment to safeguard the interests of various communities. BJP MLAs walked out, protesting over the education sector crisis, while Banerjee dismissed their claims. *—PTI*

Sonia Gandhi's health stable

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party, is currently stable following her admission to Sir Ganga Ram Hospital for a stomach-related issue. The 78-year-old politician was admitted on Sunday evening, prompting close monitoring from medical staff.

Ajay Swaroop, chairman of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, Gastroenterology stated that she was stable and was receiving attentive medical care. *—PTI*

ED to quiz Vadra in property case

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued fresh summons to Robert Vadra,Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's husband, in a money laundering case involving UK-based arms dealer Sanjay Bhandari. Vadra has to appear before the agency in New Delhi on 17 June for questioning.

Bhandari allegedly purchased a London property on Vadra's instructions and with his funds. Vadra however denied it. *—PTI*

A LONG WAIT

Thousands of stranded and confused visitors, tickets in hand, wait in front of the Louvre, as the world's most-visited museum shut down for a day on Monday, as staff went on strike in frustration over what they called unmanageable crowds
PHOTO: X

Grief weighs heavy on BJMC Foundation Day

An air of grief hung heavy on the campus of the BJ Medical College and Hospital on Monday, with wailing kin awaiting identification of their loved ones who perished in the 12 June Air India plane crash, and medics who lost their colleagues in the tragedy bravely soldiering on.

Except that today is not an ordinary day in the academic calendar of this nearly 150-year-old medical institution, which annually marks 16 June as its foundation day.

The Ahmedabad air tragedy, which claimed the lives of all but one of the 242 passengers and crew on board, and several others on the ground, has left deep scars on BJMC's residential quarters and the psyche of the survivors.

The London-bound flight AI171 -- Boeing Dreamliner 787-8 -- crashed moments after taking off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport here on Thursday afternoon, and fell onto the campus of the medical college in the Meghaninagar area, before going up in flames.

On that fateful day, many medical students and resident doctors had just sat for meals at the hostel mess of the BJMC, when the tail-side portion of the aircraft rammed into it, turning an ordinary lunch hour into a horrific nightmare.

Besides the 241 fatalities on board, another 29 persons, including five MBBS students, on the ground were killed in the Air India plane crash.

Soon after the crash, pieces of wreckage of the aircraft lay strewn around the hostel area, while thick layers of soot are still deposited on its buildings, damaged as a result of the crash.

Arun Prashant, a Chennai native and second-year MD student at the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Medical College (BJMC), recalled the horror and how he jumped from the first floor of a hostel building to escape.

"I came to have lunch around 1:30 pm. While having lunch, I heard a loud explosion, and suddenly there was smoke everywhere. I ran downstairs and then jumped from the first floor of the building," Prashant told reporters in Ahmedabad a day after the crash.

"We were around 20-30 people at Atulyam (hostel)... We got to know it was a plane crash only after coming out of the building," Prashant recalled.

The images of the detached tail portion of the aircraft precariously lodged near the roof of the hostel mess building, pieces of the fuselage scattered on the ground and inside buildings, and piles of charred bodies still haunt many who have been affected by the tragedy. Sagar Panjwani, a first-year resident doctor on the campus, said many students lost their laptops, mobile phones, clothes, and other belongings in the fire after the crash, as he lamented the loss of lives, both on board and on the ground.

The medical campus, which also houses many hospitals attached to the college, as well as the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital, currently wears a sombre mood with grieving family members either awaiting identification of the mortal remains of their loved ones or waiting to collect the bodies of their kin.

Hospital authorities have confirmed the identification of 80 victims through DNA matching, and said that 33 bodies have been handed over to the victims' families so far.

The BJMC, which has now become the epicentre of action in the wake of the crash, is one of the oldest medical colleges in India, and marks its 146th anniversary on Monday.

Beginning its journey in 1871 as the Ahmedabad Medical School, the institute has been a cornerstone of medical education since its inception.

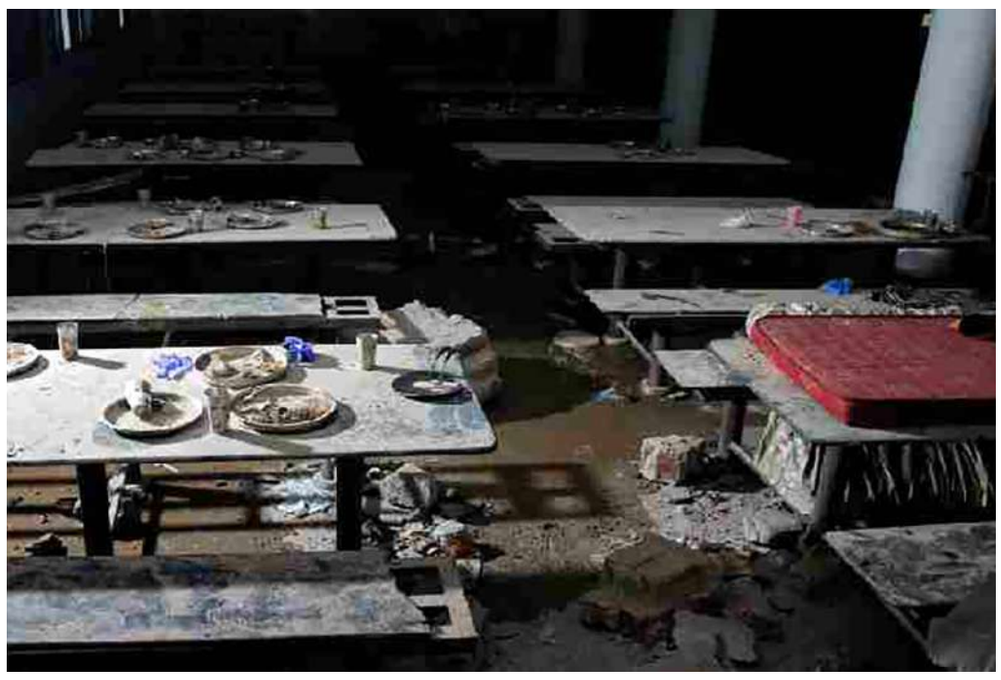
The institution steadily expanded, securing affiliation with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Bombay in 1917 and later with the Bombay University in 1946, earning its status as BJ Medical College, "offering LCPS diplomas", it says.

The college, which currently has several large buildings on its campus, including the main block built after Independence, has a humble origin.

BJMC alumni have served various medical institutions throughout their phenomenal journey, and today would have been a day for jubilation, celebration, and exchanging greetings, but for the recent air crash, one of the worst aviation disasters in recent history.

Amid the tragedy, the doctors of this prestigious institution continue to serve the injured, the ailing, and the needy, living up to the pledge they take after graduation.

While 16 June is already enshrined as a historic day for this institute, now 12 June too will be etched in the collective consciousness of people associated with the medical college -- a day they will wish to forget. —PTI



Debris lies in the medical college hostel canteen after the Air India aircraft, bound for London's Gatwick Airport, crashed there
PHOTO: PTI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR ساڈا

Goa's long tradition of preserving wild veggies

The Goa government is taking steps to preserve the old tradition of locals foraging for wild vegetables during the monsoon in the state's forests, aimed at protecting the cultural heritage and promoting sustainable food practices, officials said.

Backed by the government's initiative, Goa assembly speaker and Canacona MLA Ramesh Tawadkar has been spearheading a campaign to create awareness about the wild vegetables, popularly known as "Raan Bhaji", in the coastal state.

The Pramod Sawant-led government has been promoting the campaign during the monsoon and supporting the Raan Bhaji festival, which will be held sometime in September this year, Tawadkar told PTI.

"In the olden days, villagers in Goa included wild vegetables in their diet. These are organic varieties, naturally found in forest areas and untouched by pesticides and fertilisers," Tawadkar said.

"Life expectancy was higher in the earlier times. People used to consume vegetables according to seasons. There is a need to promote these vegetables today. You could say it is part of the BJP government's 'Fit India' initiative," he said.

These vegetables also have medicinal properties and are beneficial for people of all age groups, he said.

During the Raan Bhaji festival held in 2023 and 2024, it came to light that at least 40 different kind of wild vegetables are found in the forests of Goa, the 56-year-old legislator said.

- The Pramod Sawant-led government has been promoting the campaign during the monsoon and supporting the Raan Bhaji festival, which will be held sometime in September this year, Tawadkar told PTI.

The Sahyadri Hill ranges run through Goa's north-eastern talukas, including Canacona, Sanguem, Quepem and Sattari, which serve as the key hub for wild vegetables.

Tawadkar said he aims to take the Raan Bhaji festival out of Goa, showcasing the coastal state's rich forest legacy to the world.

The monsoon season has already begun in Goa, and Raan Bhajis are becoming a part of the daily meals of people in Canacona taluka.

A PTI Videos team on Saturday visited Canacona taluka where local resident Akshada Velip took them to a forest to forage for "Teryachi Bhaji" and "Talkilyachi Bhaji".

After trekking through the dense forest for some distance, they reached the hidden spots where these wild vegetables flourish.

The locals possess an intimate knowledge of the land, knowing exactly where to find these natural treasures.

"We don't use oil while preparing these vegetables. They are cooked only with water, which makes them more tasty," Velip told the team members at her house where she prepared the vegetables for them.

Triphal (Sichuan Pepper), jackfruit seeds, dal and other grains add a nutritional value to these dishes, she explained.

Taikilo (Cassia Tora), Tero (Colcocasia Esculenta), Shirmuddi (Celosia Argentea) and Piuchi Bhaji (Safed Musli) are usually found on the sides of paddy fields and deep in the forests, she added.

Another local, Suvarna Velip, who lives in the same area, said these vegetables are good for pregnant women and also those who suffer from iron deficiency. —PTI

Women from Canacona taluka pick wild vegetables from the forest region, in Goa. This is a common practice during rainy season
PHOTO: PTI

In 2025, US looks less like a dream, more like a place to avoid

The world may be rethinking the American dream.

For centuries, people in other countries saw the United States as place of welcome and opportunity. Now, President Donald Trump's drive for mass deportations of migrants is riling the streets of Los Angeles, college campuses, even churches — and fuelling a global rethinking about the virtues and promise of coming to America.

"The message coming from Washington is that you are not welcome in the United States," said Edwin van Rest, CEO of Studyportals, which tracks real-time searches by international students considering studying in other countries. Student interest in studying in America has dropped to its lowest level since the COVID-19 pandemic, it found. "The fact is, there are great opportunities elsewhere."

There has long been a romanticised notion about immigration and America. The reality has always been different, with race and ethnicity playing undeniable roles in the tension over who can be an American. The US still beckons to the "huddled masses" from the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. The strong economy has helped draw millions more every year, with the inflow driving the US population over 340 million.

Early clues across industries — like tourism, trade, entertainment and education — suggest the American dream is fading for foreigners who have historically flooded to the US.

Polling by Pew Research Centre from January through April found that opinions of the US have worsened over the past year in 15 of the 24 countries it surveyed.

Trump and many of his supporters maintain that migrants in the country illegally threaten American safety, jobs and culture. But people in the country legally also have been caught in Trump's dragnet.

Trump's global tariff war and his campaign against international students who have expressed pro-Palestinian sympathies stick especially stubbornly in the minds of people across American borders who for decades clamoured to participate in the land of free speech and opportunity.

For much of its history, America had encouraged immigration as the country sought intellectual and economic fuel to spur its growth.

But from the beginning, the United States has wrestled with the question of who is allowed to be an American. The new country was built on land brutally swiped from Native Americans. It was later populated by millions of enslaved Africans.

The American Civil War ignited in part over the same subject. The federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prohibited the immigration of Chinese labourers for a decade. During World War II, the US government incarcerated about 120,000 people of Japanese descent in 10 concentration camps. About two-thirds were US citizens.

Still, the United States has always been a nation of immigrants, steered by the "American Creed" developed by Thomas Jefferson, which posits that the tenets of equality, hard work and freedom are inherently American.

Everyone, after all, comes from somewhere — a fact underscored on-camera in the Oval Office this month when German Chancellor Friedrich Merz gave the president the framed birth certificate of Trump's grandfather, also named Friedrich, who emigrated from Germany in 1885. He was one of millions of Germans who fled war and economic strife to move to the United States in the late 19th Century.

There's a story there, too, that suggests the Trump family knows both the triumphs of immigration and the struggle and shame of being expelled.

After marrying and making a fortune in America, the elder Trump attained US citizenship and tried return to Germany. He was expelled for failing to complete his military service — and wrote about the experience.

Trump himself has married two immigrant women: the late Ivana Zelnícková Trump, of what's now the Czech Republic, and his current wife, Melania Knauss Trump of Slovenia.

It's hard to overstate the degree to which immigration has changed the face and culture of America — and divided it.

Immigration in 2024 drove US population growth to its fastest rate in 23 years as the nation surpassed 340 million residents, the US Census Bureau said in December.

Immigration accounted for all of the growth in 16 states that otherwise would have lost population, according to the Brookings Institution.

But where some Americans see immigration largely as an influx of workers and brain power, Trump sees an "invasion," a longstanding view.

Since returning to the White House, Trump has initiated an far-reaching campaign of immigration enforcement that has pushed the limits of executive power and clashed with federal judges trying to restrain him over his invocation of special powers to deport people, cancel visas and deposit deportees in third countries.

In his second term, unlike his first, he's not retreating from some unpopular positions on immigration. Instead, the subject has emerged as Trump's strongest issue in public polling, reflecting both his grip on the Republican base and a broader shift in public sentiment.

The US is still viewed as an economic powerhouse, though people in more countries consider China to be the world's top economy, according to the Pew poll, and it's unclear whether Trump's policies could cause a meaningful drain of international students and others who feel under siege in the United States.

It predicted that if the trend continues, the demand for programmes in the US could plummet further, with US programmes losing ground to countries like the United Kingdom and Australia. —*PTI*

Polling by Pew Research Centre from January through April found that opinions of the US have worsened over the past year in 15 of the 24 countries it surveyed
PHOTO: FREEPIK

IRAN MAY LEAVE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

Day 4: Five killed in Israel as Iran fires around 100 missiles

TEL AVIV, 16 JUNE

Iran's foreign ministry announced on Monday that the Iranian parliament is preparing a bill to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), raising fears that Tehran may pursue atomic weapons. The government insists it remains opposed to weapons of mass destruction, citing Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's religious edict against them.

President Masoud Pezeshkian reaffirmed Iran's right to peaceful nuclear energy and research, despite mounting international concern. Iran has enriched uranium to near weapons-grade levels in recent years, with experts suggesting it could build multiple warheads within months if it chose to.

The announcement comes amid escalating hostilities between Iran and Israel, now in their fourth day. Early Monday, Iran fired around 100 missiles at Israel, killing five civilians and injuring at least 87 more. Israeli officials report over 500 wounded and 24 dead since the start of the conflict, with Iran launching more than 370 missiles and hundreds of drones.

One missile landed near the US Consulate in Tel Aviv, causing minor damage. No American personnel were injured, but both the consulate and the US Embassy in Jerusalem have been closed for the day as a precaution, Ambassador Mike Huckabee confirmed.

The Israeli military responded with intensified air strikes, targeting 10 command centres of Iran's elite Quds Force in Tehran. Explosions rocked Tel Aviv before dawn, with heavy smoke filling the skies. A residential building in Petah Tikva was hit, killing two men and two women in their 70s, along with one other person. Dozens of homes were destroyed or damaged.

Israel claims it has now achieved "aerial superiority" over Tehran, having significantly degraded Iranian air defences and missile systems. "We now control the skies from western Iran to Tehran," an Israeli military spokesperson said.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard warned that future strikes would be "more forceful, severe, precise and destructive." Iranian officials reported 1,277 wounded and 224 dead, though Human Rights Activists estimates more than 400 fatalities.

Iran says it will cease missile strikes if Israel does the same. Israel maintains its actions are necessary to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. —*PTI*

The Israeli Iron Dome air defense system in action, intercepting missiles during an Iranian attack on Tel Aviv **PHOTO: PTI**

Rescue team work at the site where a missile launched from Iran struck Tel Aviv in Israel **PHOTO: PTI**

Israelis take shelter in a basement in Jerusalem following a missile warning **PHOTO: PTI**

PAK WILL NUKE ISRAEL: IRAN

A senior Iranian officer has claimed Pakistan will launch a nuclear strike on Israel if Tel Aviv uses a nuclear bomb against Iran. General Mohsen Rezaei of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps made the statement during a televised interview, amid ongoing Iran-Israel hostilities that have killed at least 248 people.

Rezaei, also a member of Iran's National Security Council, said Pakistan had provided assurance of retaliation. However, Pakistani officials have denied the claim, and the statement remains unverified. NDTV noted it could not independently confirm the authenticity of the video. —*Agencies*

Iran wants to kill Trump: Bibi

They (Iran) want to kill him (Donald Trump). He's enemy number one. He never took the path that others took to try to bargain with them in a way that is weak, giving them basically a pathway to enrich uranium

—Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister

ISRAEL-IRAN CONFLICT TRIGGERS FUEL CRISIS IN PAKISTAN

Fuel shortages have hit Pakistan's Balochistan province after border closures with Iran, prompted by the Israel-Iran conflict. Petrol stations relying on smuggled Iranian fuel have shut, sparking panic. Border points in Gwadar and Panjgur have been sealed, halting fuel and food supplies. Despite federal fuel price hikes, Iranian fuel remains cheaper and widely used. Around 70% of stations are reportedly closed. Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind denied any crisis, blaming "rumour-mongers" profiting from illegal fuel sales. He said closures were part of a crackdown on unsafe, unauthorised stations selling smuggled Iranian petrol and diesel. —*PTI*

'Iran was close to making nuclear bomb'

A satellite image of the Isfahan Uranium enrichment facility in Iran after being hit by Israeli airstrikes on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

TEHRAN, 16 JUNE

Iran was just weeks away from assembling a nuclear bomb, Israeli media reported Sunday, citing intelligence described as "golden information." Israeli Army Radio said Iran's nuclear scientists had made key progress in weapon design, secretly working on weaponisation since late 2023.

Israeli strikes on 13 June, under Operation 'Rising Lion', targeted nuclear and military facilities, including Iran's Defence Ministry HQ.

A senior IDF official said all scientists killed were linked to the nuclear detonation device. The IAEA recently warned Iran's uranium stockpile could yield up to nine nuclear weapons. —*PTI*

Trump is Iran's enemy number one, says Bibi

WASHINGTON, 16 JUNE

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu claimed Iran's regime marked Donald Trump as "enemy number one" and plotted his assassination due to his hardline stance against its nuclear ambitions. Speaking to Fox News, Netanyahu said Trump's decisive actions — withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal, killing Qasem Soleimani, and blocking uranium enrichment — made him a primary target.

Netanyahu also revealed a missile was fired into his bedroom, calling himself Trump's "junior partner" in confronting Iran. He warned of an "imminent" nuclear and missile threat, with Iran allegedly aiming to produce 10,000 ballistic missiles within three years. Operation Rising Lion, he said, set back Iran's nuclear programme significantly. Israel, he asserted, is defending not only itself but the wider world. He also said his country is prepared to do whatever is necessary to eliminate the nuclear and ballistic missile threat Iran poses to the world. —*PTI*

Israeli shootings kill 38 Palestinians on Monday

KHAN YOUNIS, 16 JUNE

Gaza's Health Ministry on Monday said that 38 Palestinians were killed in new shootings in areas of food distribution centres in the south of the territory. The toll on Monday was the deadliest yet in the near-daily shootings that have taken place as thousands of Palestinians move through Israeli military-controlled areas to reach the food centres. Witnesses say Israeli troops open fire in an attempt to control the crowds. There was no immediate comment by the Israeli military on Monday's deaths. —*PTI*

Macron's jibe at Trump: Greenland 'not to be sold'

NUUK, 16 JUNE

French President Emmanuel Macron strongly affirmed that Greenland is "not to be sold" nor "to be taken" during his visit to the strategically significant Arctic territory, which has drawn interest from US President Donald Trump. Speaking at a press conference in Nuuk, Macron emphasised European solidarity, stating, "You are not alone," and condemning any aggressive intentions regarding the territory. His visit, coinciding with a Group of Seven summit in Canada, featured discussions on security, economic development, and the pressing issue of climate change, illustrated by a visit to a melting glacier. Macron's remarks follow controversial assertions from US officials about potential military actions regarding Greenland, with local leaders asserting the importance of international law and respect for borders. Greenland's Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen highlighted that the territory will "never, ever" become property that can be purchased. —*PTI*

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and his British counterpart Keir Starmer with Cohere CEO Aiden Gomez **PHOTO: PTI**

G7 gather in Canada amid Israel–Iran crisis

KANANASKIS, 16 JUNE

Leaders of some of the world's biggest economic powers are arriving in the Canadian Rockies on Sunday for a Group of Seven (G7) summit, overshadowed by an escalating conflict between Israel and Iran and US President Donald Trump's unresolved trade war.

Israel's strikes on Iran and Tehran's retaliation, which appeared to catch many world leaders unawares, are the latest sign of a more volatile world.

In an indication of how far Israel was prepared to go, Trump in recent days vetoed an Israeli plan to kill Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, a US official said.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he had discussed efforts to de-escalate the crisis with Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as well as other world leaders and said he expected "intense discussions" would continue at the summit.

As summit host, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney has decided to abandon the annual practice of issuing a joint statement, or communique, at the end of the meeting.

With other leaders wanting to talk to Trump in an effort to talk him out of imposing tariffs, the summit risks being a series of bilateral conversations rather than a show of unity. —*PTI*

'Innocent bystander' killed in US protest

SALT LAKE CITY, 16 JUNE

An "innocent bystander" at the "No Kings" demonstration in downtown Salt Lake City was shot and killed Saturday, police said.

The gunman was brandishing a rifle at demonstrators.

Police took the alleged rifleman, Arturo Gamboa, 24, into custody on Saturday evening on a murder charge, Salt Lake City Police Chief Brian Redd said at a Sunday news conference. The deceased was Arthur Folasa Ah Loo, 39.

Detectives do not yet know why Gamboa pulled out a rifle or ran from the peacekeepers, but they accused him of creating the dangerous situation that led to Ah Loo's death.

Redd said the man who dressed in a neon green vest and was believed to be part of the peacekeeping team fired three shots from a handgun at Gamboa, inflicting a relatively minor injury but fatally shooting Ah Loo.

TRUMP UNFAZED

On Sunday, President Donald Trump directed federal immigration officials to prioritise deportations from Democratic-run cities after protests erupted in Los Angeles and other major cities against his immigration policies.

Demonstrators participate in the 'No Kings' protest in Philadelphia on Sunday **PHOTO: PTI**

Trump in a social media posting called on ICE officials "to do all in their power to achieve the very important goal of delivering the single largest Mass Deportation Program in History". He added that to reach the goal, officials must "deport Illegal Aliens in America's largest Cities, such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York, where Millions upon Millions of Illegal Aliens reside". —*PTI*

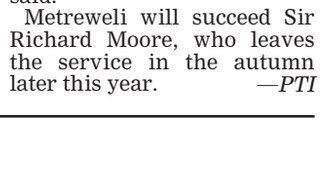
Minnesota gunman wore latex mask, kill list had 70

BELLE PLAINE, 16 JUNE

A man in a police uniform and possibly wearing a latex mask fatally shot former Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark, in their suburban Minneapolis home on Saturday. Vance Luther Boelter, 57, also wounded Senator John Hoffman and his wife, Yvette, in a separate attack earlier that night.

Boelter, a former political appointee, fled the scene in a vehicle altered to resemble a police car. Officers located the abandoned vehicle in rural Sibley County, prompting Minnesota's largest-ever manhunt.

He was arrested Sunday after surrendering in the woods near his home. Authorities found writings and a hit list of nearly 70 names in Boelter's vehicle, targeting Democrats, abortion rights advocates, and healthcare facilities. Those named include Rep. Ilhan Omar and Sen. Tina Smith. —*PTI*



Vance Luther Boelter **PHOTO: X**

HOUSING CRUNCH

Spaniards turn squirt guns on tourists

BARCELONA, 16 JUNE

Protesters used water guns against unsuspecting tourists in Barcelona and on the Spanish island of Mallorca on Sunday as demonstrators marched to demand a rethink of an economic model they believe is fuelling a housing crunch and erasing the character of their hometowns.

The marches were part of the first coordinated effort by activists concerned with the ills of over-tourism across southern Europe's top destinations. While several thousands rallied in Mallorca in the biggest gathering of the day, hundreds more gathered in other Spanish cities, as well as in Venice, Italy and Portuguese capital Lisbon.

Barcelona hosted 15.5 million visitors last year eager to see Antoni Gaudí's La Sagrada Familia basilica and the Las Ramblas promenade.

"The squirt guns are to bother the tourists a bit," Andreu Martínez said in Barcelona with a chuckle after spritzing a tourist couple. "Barcelona has been handed to the tourists. This is a fight to give Barcelona back to its residents."

Martínez says his rent has risen over 30 per cent as more apartments in his neighbourhood are rented to tourists for short-term stays. "Our lives, as lifelong residents of Barcelona, are coming to an end," he said. "We are being pushed out systematically."

Around 5,000 people gathered in Palma, the capital of Mallorca, with some toting water guns as well and chanting "Everywhere you look, all you see are tourists."

The tourists who were targeted by water blasts laughed it off. —*PTI*

The marches were part of the first coordinated effort by activists concerned with the ills of over-tourism across southern Europe's top destinations **PHOTO: X**

Starmer appoints MI6's 1st female chief in history

LONDON, 16 JUNE

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has announced the "historic" appointment of **Blaise Metreweli** as the first female chief of the UK's Secret Intelligence Service, commonly known as MI6, in the 116-year history of the organisation.

Commonly referred to as 'C', the international spy agency's chief has operational responsibility for MI6 and is the only publicly named member of the organisation.

Metreweli, 47, has been promoted from her current role as Director General, or 'Q', responsible for technology and innovation in MI6 and has previously held a director-level role at MI5 – the UK's domestic security service.

"The historic appointment of Blaise Metreweli comes at a time when the work of our intelligence services has never been more vital," Starmer said on Sunday.

"The United Kingdom is facing threats on an unprecedented scale – be it aggressors who send their spy ships to our waters or hackers whose sophisticated cyber plots seek to disrupt our public services," he said.

Metreweli will succeed Sir Richard Moore, who leaves the service in the autumn later this year. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Rupee rises 8P to close at 86.03 against USD

MUMBAI, 16 JUNE

The rupee rose 8 paise to 86.03 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday amid a strong show at the domestic equity markets, weakening dollar, and easing of global crude oil prices. However, decline in exports, along with foreign fund outflows, capped further gains in the local unit, forex traders said.At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 86.16 against the greenback and traded in the range of 85.94-86.24 before closing at 86.03 (provisional), up 8 paise from its previous close. The rupee had plummeted 59 paise to 86.11 against the US dollar on Friday. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, declined 0.20 per cent to 97.98. *—PTI*

Domestic vehicle wholesale down at 3.4L units: SIAM

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

Domestic passenger vehicle (PV) wholesales fell marginally by 0.8per cent to 3,44,656 units in May 2025, compared to 3,47,492 units in May last year, according to the Society of Indian Automobile. Manufacturers (SIAM). Despite this, overall vehicle sales rose 1.8 per cent year-on-year to 20,12,969 units. Two-wheeler sales grew 2.2 per cent to 16,55,927 units. Motorcycle sales remained steady at 10,39,156 units, while scooter sales increased 7.1 per cent to 5,79,507 units. Three-wheeler sales dropped 3.3 per cent to 53,942 units. Maruti Suzuki's sales fell to 1,35,962 units, while Mahindra & Mahindra rose to 52,431. Hyundai declined to 43,861 units. SIAM Director General Rajesh Menon said all segments showed stable performance. *—PTI*

'India expected to see growth amid supply chain shift'

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

India is expected to witness strong and exponential growth in the electronics manufacturing sector amid the ongoing global supply chain realignment in the electronics sector, according to a new report by PwC. It said the electronics industry is experiencing a shift in the global supply chain, with India emerging as a key destination. This has led to significant growth in the production of electronic products. "India aims to reach USD 500 Bn of domestic prediction - the nation may reach USD 282 Bn conservatively by 2030," it said. The report outlined three possible growth scenarios for the sector, conservative, moderate, and ambitious. India's domestic electronics production could reach at least USD 282 billion by 2030, it added. *—ANI*

AlphaGrep secures SEBI nod for new MF venture

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

AlphaGrep Securities, a prominent quantitative investment firm, announced on Monday that it has received in-principle approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to sponsor a new mutual fund. This approval signifies a pivotal step in AlphaGrep's mission to expand its data-driven and technology-enhanced investment strategies to a broader spectrum of retail and institutional investors in India. Established in 2010, AlphaGrep has developed a specialised quantitative trading and investment platform, currently managing over Rs 8,500 crore on a global scale. The new mutual fund initiative will be under the banner of AlphaGrep Investment Management, which will oversee the proposed operations. *—PTI*

WPI inflation dips to 14-month low of 0.39%

Experts say geopolitical tensions might push up the prices

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

PHOTO: PTI

Wholesale price inflation (WPI) declined to a 14-month low of 0.39 per cent in May on easing prices of food articles and fuel, and experts said geopolitical tensions could push up prices.

WPI-based inflation was 0.85 per cent in April. It was 2.74 per cent in May last year.

In a statement, the industry ministry said the inflaton in May 2025 is in positive zone primarily due to "increase in prices of manufacture of food products, electricity, other manufacturing, chemicals and chemical products, manufacture of other transport equipment and non-food articles".

According to the WPI data, food articles saw a deflation of 1.56 per cent in May, against a deflation of 0.86 per cent in April, with vegetables, onion, potato and pulses seeing negative inflation.

Deflation in vegetables was 21.62 per cent in May, compared to 18.26 per cent in April.

Fuel and power, too, saw a deflation of 2.27 pc in May, compared to a 2.18 per cent inflation in April.

Manufactured products, however, saw positive inflation at 2.04 per cent, compared to 2.62 per cent in April.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) mainly takes into account retail inflation while formulating monetary policy.

Data released last week showed retail inflation eased to over six-year low of 2.82 per cent in May mainly due to subdued food prices.

The RBI this month cut benchmark policy interest rates by a sharp 0.50 per cent to 5.50 per cent amid easing inflation.

The sub-4 per cent average retail inflation projection is the lowest in recent years.

ICRA Senior Economist Rahul Agrawal said the cooling in WPI was broad-based, with the food, non-food manufacturing, minerals, and fuel and power segments contributing to the dip in headline print between these months.

ICRA said crude oil prices have risen quite sharply in the ongoing month, following escalation of tensions between Israel and Iran.

—PTI

India's export rose 2.8% in May

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

India's overall exports, merchandise and services combined, in May were reported at USD 71.12 billion, marking a 2.77 per cent rise on a yearly basis, data from the Union Commerce Ministry showed on Monday. The total exports in May 2024 were pegged at USD 69.2 billion.

Exports of merchandise goods declined from USD 39.59 billion to USD 38.73 billion, and exports of services rose from USD 29.61 billion to USD 32.39 billion during May 2025.

India imported goods and services worth USD 77.75 billion, down from USD 78.55 billion in the same month last year.

The trade deficit in May narrowed to USD 6.62 billion from USD 9.35 billion same month last year.

So far in 2025–26, April–May, India's total exports now stood at around USD 142.43 billion, up 5.75 per cent year-on-year.

The country's imports too increased year-on-year in April-May, by 6.52 per cent as per data published today.

Overall imports, both merchandise and services combined, during April-May increased from USD 149.81 billion to USD 157.57 billion.

April-May combined trade deficit, meaning the difference between the exports and the imports -- was at USD 17.14 billion, compared with USD 15.12 billion same period of last fiscal.

India's total exports have touched an all-time high of USD 824.9 billion in the recently-concluded financial year 2024-25. This marks a yearly growth of 6.01 per cent over USD 778.1 billion exports in 2023-24, setting a new annual milestone.

The 2024-25 exports exceeded the initial anticipation of USD 800 billion. *—ANI*

SBI CUTS INTEREST RATES BY UP TO 50 BPS

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

India's largest bank, the State Bank of India (SBI), has announced a reduction in its lending rates by 50 basis points, following the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recent policy rate cut. This move is set to make loans more affordable for both existing and prospective borrowers.

From 15 June 2025, SBI's Repo Linked Lending Rate (RLLR) will decrease to 7.75 per cent, while its External Benchmark Based Lending Rate (EBLR) will also drop by 50 basis points to 8.15 per cent, down from 8.65 per cent.

This adjustment comes in the wake of the RBI's monetary policy committee decision on 6 June to cut the benchmark repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.5 per cent in an effort to stimulate economic growth, which has hit a four-year low of 6.5 per cent in FY25. *—PTI*

India Inc to see stable growth in June: ICRA

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

The Indian industry is projected to experience stable revenue growth in the June quarter of the current fiscal year, buoyed by robust domestic demand. However, ongoing geopolitical tensions are expected to affect sentiment, particularly in export-oriented sectors, according to the rating agency ICRA.

In a recent statement, ICRA forecasted that India's operating profit margins (OPM) will range between 18.2 per cent and 18.5 per cent for the first quarter (April-June) of FY26, reflecting a sequential recovery over the past few quarters. The agency highlighted that a moderation in interest costs, following recent repo rate cuts totalling 100 basis points, would enhance the interest coverage ratio for Indian corporations.

Kinjal Shah, Senior Vice President at ICRA, noted that while global economic uncertainties may result in cautious private capital expenditure, several emerging sectors like electronics, semiconductors, and electric vehicles are expected to attract increased investment. *—PTI*

GOLD FALLS BY ₹170 TO ₹1,01,370/10G

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

Gold prices fell Rs 170 to Rs 1,01,370 per 10g in the national capital on Monday amid weak global trends, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,01,540 per 10g on Friday.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity slipped by Rs 150 to Rs 1,00,550 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). The metal had settled at Rs 1,00,700 per 10g in the previous session.

Additionally, silver prices declined by Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,07,100 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday. The white metal had ended at Rs 1,08,100 per kg on Friday.

In the futures trade, the most traded August contract for gold was trading lower at Rs 99,918 per 10g, down by Rs 358 on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

"Gold traded in a narrow range near Rs 99,800, as profit booking was witnessed following reports of multiple potential trade deals between India-US, India-China, and US-Euro zones. "Gold prices corrected slightly but continue to hover near record highs as escalating tensions between Israel and Iran drive investors toward safe-haven assets," Abans Financial Services' Chief Executive Officer Chintan Mehta said. *—PTI*

Markets rebound nearly 1% amid Israel-Iran clash

MUMBAI, 16 JUNE

Shrugging off geopolitical concerns amid escalating tensions between Israel and Iran, stock markets rebounded by nearly 1 per cent on Monday following value buying in oil & gas and IT shares and gains in other Asian markets as Brent crude oil prices dropped.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 677.55 points or 0.84 per cent to settle at 81,796.15 with 27 of its constituents ending in the green and three with losses. During the day, it surged 747.22 points or 0.92 per cent to 81,865.82.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 227.90 points or 0.92 per cent to 24,946.50.

Among Sensex firms, UltraTech Cement rose the most by 2.39 per cent. Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech, Tata Consultancy Services, Eternal, Asian Paints, Tata Steel and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the gainers.

Tata Motors, Adani Ports and Sun Pharma were the laggards.

"Despite ongoing geopolitical tensions between Israel and Iran, the market moved higher, supported by gains in large-cap stocks, as investors maintained their focus on long-term fundamentals in the time of volatile situations. *—PTI*

Global shares rise as oil prices ease

HONG KONG, 16 JUNE

Global shares have seen an uptick, while oil prices have slightly retreated following fresh missile attacks from Iran on Israel early Monday. Over the weekend, Israel targeted Iranian nuclear and military sites, causing oil prices to soar by over 7 per cent on Friday due to concerns about a potential disruption in Iranian oil supplies. US benchmark crude settled at $72.25 per barrel, with Brent crude at $73.50—both at their highest levels this year.

In pre-market trading, the S&P 500 and Dow Jones Industrial Average rose by 0.5 per cent . European shares also gained; Germany's DAX increased by 0.2 per cent, and France's CAC 40 climbed 0.6 per cent. Asia-Pacific markets also recorded gains, with Tokyo's Nikkei 225 up 1.3 per cent and Seoul's Kospi rising 1.8 per cent. *—PTI*

TATA MOTORS SHARES DROP

MUMBAI, 16 JUNE

Tata Motors shares dropped over 5 per cent to Rs 674.70 after its UK unit, Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), projected weaker financial performance for FY26. JLR expects EBIT margins of 5–7 per cent, down from 8.5 per cent last year, and free cash flow close to zero, compared to £1.5 billion in FY25.

The outlook raised investor concerns, given JLR contributed 71 per cent of Tata Motors' revenue and 80 per cent of its profit last year.

Despite market headwinds, JLR retained its leadership in the premium segment. Moody's, however, affirmed Tata Motors' Ba1 rating with a positive outlook and upgraded JLR's rating. *—Agencies*

Waterways Tourism eyes ₹727 cr IPO

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

Cruise operator Waterways Leisure Tourism has submitted initial documents to the markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 727 crore through an Initial Public Offering (IPO).

The offering will consist entirely of new shares, with no offer-for-sale component, as indicated in the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) filed last week.

The company aims to allocate Rs 552.53 crore of the proceeds towards rental deposits and lease payments for its subsidiary, Baycruise Shipping and Leasing (IFSC) Private Ltd, with the remainder earmarked for general corporate purposes.

Waterways operate the 'MV Empress' under the brand 'Cordelia Cruises', having hosted over 549,000 guests since its inception. *—PTI*

STRATEGY SHIFT

Meta names Arun Srinivas as its India MD amid leadership change

BENGALURU, 16 JUNE

Meta assigned Arun Srinivas as the new Managing Director (MD) of its Indian operations. It will be in effect from 1 July. This move was followed by the recent restructuring of Sandhya Devanathan's portfolio, who is now the head of both India and Southeast Asia.

Meta said that Srinivas' new role will be to lead the company's business strategy in India which will be focusing on aligning innovation, along with revenue generation and growth initiatives. He is also going to be responsible for creating stronger relations with developers, advertisers and partners of Meta's considerably influential markets.

Srinivas is a post-graduate from IIM Kolkata with an experience of almost 30 years across consumer and technology sectors. He has possessed leadership roles in Hindustan Unilever, Reebok, OLA, and WestBridge Capital. Srinivas joined Meta in 2020 and currently leads the Ads Business in India, where he works with AI, reels and messaging.

"Arun's impressive track record of building high-performing teams, driving product innovation, and fostering strong partnerships makes him the ideal leader to drive Meta's continued investment in the country," Devanathan said about Srinivas' new role. — *Agencies*

RIL sells 85L shares of Asian Paints for ₹1.8K cr

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries on Monday sold 85 lakh shares of Asian Paints for Rs 1,876 crore through an open market transaction.

The share sale came days after Reliance Industries offloaded 3.50 crore equity shares or 3.64 per cent stake in Mumbai-based Asian Paints on Thursday.

According to the block deal data on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), Reliance Industries through its affiliate Siddhant Commercials Pvt Ltd disposed of 85 lakh shares, representing a 0.88 per cent stake in Asian Paints.

The shares were sold at an average price of Rs 2,207 apiece, taking the transaction value to Rs 1,875.95 crore.

Meanwhile, ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund (MF) bought these shares at the same price. With the acquisition of shares, ICICI Prudential MF's holding in Asian Paints rose to 2.12 per cent from 1.24 per cent.

Shares of Asian Paints increased 1.21 per cent to close at Rs 2,241 apiece on the NSE. *—PTI*

Study: Workplace recognition boosts motivation, trust

GUWAHATI, 16 JUNE

Recognising employees' efforts plays a vital role in boosting motivation, trust, and a sense of belonging, according to a new study by Guwahati-based Vantage Circle and Mumbai's Great Place to Work India.

Their joint report, The Recognition Effect: A Leadership Blueprint for Emotionally Intelligent Workplaces, reveals that recognition, when done right, is a powerful force that transforms workplace culture and performance.

Vantage Circle CEO Partha Neog said true recognition lies in what is genuinely felt, not simply given. *—Agencies*

PHOTO: X

Anderson, Tendulkar Trophy launch delayed

LONDON, 16 JUNE

The launch of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy for the upcoming Test series between India and England has been delayed due to the recent airline tragedy in Ahmedabad, which led to 275 deaths. Previously called the Pataudi Trophy in honour of former India captain Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, the decision to rename it as the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy (ATT) was taken by the host England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). "Yes, the launch of the ATT Trophy (which was to be held originally on June 14) has been delayed due to the recent tragedy in Ahmedabad. It has not been cancelled.—*PTI*

Chennai Open back on WTA calendar after three years

CHENNAI, 16 JUNE

India will host the Chennai Open, a WTA 250 tournament, after three years, the Tamil Nadu Tennis Association announced on Monday with the main draw action set to unfold from 27 October.The tournament had featured on the WTA calendar back in 2022 when the Czech Republic's Linda had emerged singles champion."- Finally, our efforts to get a major international sporting /tennis event to Chennai have borne fruit, thanks to the strong support of the Government of Tamil Nadu and the SDAT (Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu)," TNTA PresidentAmritraj said."The event will be broadcast on a major sports channel. I look forward to the enthusiastic participation of the sporting public of Chennai in making the event a grand success," he added.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X

George Russell wins 2025 Canadian Grand Prix

DUBAI, 16 JUNE

Championship leader Oscar Piastri accepted McLaren team-mate Lando Norris's apologies on Sunday after the Briton misjudged a passing move and crashed into him in the closing laps of the 2025 Canadian Grand Prix. Mercedes' George Russell won the race from pole ahead of four-time champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull, with teenage rookie Kimi third in the second Mercedes to become the third youngest driver to take an F1 podium position. The collision on lap 67 of the 70-lap race came when Norris attempted to overtake his Australian teammate and title rival on the straight—*PTI*

PHOTO: X

WI beat Ireland to clinch the T20 cricket series

BREADY, 16 JUNE

West Indies piled up its second-highest Twenty20 international innings and beat Ireland by 62 runs to clinch a rain-marred three game series 1-0. West Indies posted 256-5 after being sent in at Bready Cricket Club, propelled by an opening stand of 122 in 10.3 overs between Evin Lewis (91 runs in 44 balls) and captain Shai Hope (51 in 27). West Indies smashed 20 sixes in total. Lewis hit eight maximums, with four each for Hope and Keacy Carty, who was 49 not out from 22 deliveries. Ireland replied with 194-7. Ross Adair (48 in 36) and Harry Tector (38 in 25) took the total to 114-1 before Ireland was reduced to 116-4 in 12 overs.—*PTI*

Women's ODI WC: India to face Pak on 5 Oct

DUBAI, 16 JUNE

The marquee 50-over women's tournament kickstarts on 30 September, with five cities across Sri Lanka and India playing host.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has unveiled the complete schedule for the 2025 edition of the Women's Cricket World Cup. Hosts India will take on Sri Lanka in the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 opener on 30 September 2025 in Bengaluru.

Meanwhile, reigning champions Australia will open their title defence against Trans-Tasman rivals and defending T20 World Cup champions, New Zealand, in Indore on 1 October. The schedule for the eight-team tournament was confirmed by the ICC on Monday, with the event to run in India and Sri Lanka from 30 September to 2 November.

A total of five cities across the two countries will host matches, with Bengaluru, Vizag, Indore, Guwahati and Colombo all scheduled for fixtures. One semi-final will be held in Bengaluru, with the other to be played in either Colombo or Guwahati. The Final is scheduled for 2 November in Bengaluru or Colombo. The eight-team tournament will be played with teams facing the rest of the competition in a single round-robin, with the top four sides progressing to the semi-finals. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@THECRICKETGULLY

India should play both Kuldeep and Jadeja at Leeds: Harbhajan

England will hold the edge, but India will push hard: Hayden

LONDON, 16 JUNE

India should look to play Kuldeep Yadav. Of course, Jadeja will bowl with him. So, two spinners with three seamers would be the kind of perfect match for this game," Harbhajan told PTI Videos on Monday.

Spin great Harbhajan Singh has thrown his weight behind wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav to start in India's playing XI for the first Test against England alongside Ravindra Jadeja.The series opener begins at Leeds on 20 June. Traditionally, the surface at Leeds aids the pacers more than the spinners.

The turbanator termed the left-arm wrist spinner as a potential match-winner irrespective of the conditions."Let's see if conditions will change or favour the spinners.

But even if it doesn't, I think these are two capable bowlers who can take wickets on any wicket," he said. Drawing on his own experience, Harbhajan recalled India's bold decision to field two spinners at Headingley in 2002, when he and Anil Kumble bagged 11 wickets between them on a green top."That was a very unique decision then.

The pitch was as green as we are standing on this grass... But the management decided we'll go with two spinners and two fast bowlers, and Sanjay Bangar will bowl as well.

Matthew Hayden believes India will have a strong chance of winning the upcoming Test series against England if they can clinch the games in Leeds and Manchester. "It is a pretty young team. Probably going to say that England are going to win the series, but it's not going to come without a fight. I feel like there are going to be one or two Tests that India will take themselves." Manchester will host the fourth Test from 23 July. I don't think England bowlers are that good, they have got several injuries. —*PTI*

Head coach Gambhir to join India squad on Tuesday

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

India head coach Gautam Gambhir, who had flown back home last week due to a family emergency, will link up with the squad on Tuesday ahead of the opening Test against England at Leeds, beginning on 20 June.

Gambhir had rushed back to India after his mother suffered a heart attack and had to be hospitalised.

"His mother is doing well now. Gautam will leave tomorrow and join the squad the same day," a BCCI source told PTI.

The former India opener had missed the closed-door intra-squad match between India and India A in Beckenham that ended on Sunday.

In his absence, assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate, batting coach Sitanshu Kotak, and bowling coach Morne Morkel supervised the team's preparation ahead of the five-match rubber.

The Shubman Gill-led Indian Test squad is searching for its first series win in England since 2007. —*PTI*

The Palestinian team needed to win its last three Group B games in Asian qualifying to advance to another continental playoff round

PHOTO: X/@FUTBOLPALESTINE

PENALTY SHATTERS PALESTINIAN DREAM FOR WORLD CUP 2026

AMMAN, 16 JUNE

An engrossing qualifying journey of 16 games and the obstacles of a war came crashing down in an instant for Oday Dabbagh and his Palestinian team.

Their legacy will long continue.

Players left the field in tears in the immediate aftermath at the King Abdullah II Stadium in Amman, Jordan, last Thursday after their quest for a first appearance at a World Cup evaporated on a contentious penalty awarded deep in extra time. Fans looked on, stunned.

"It's very hard," Dabbagh, the team's star striker, told The Associated Press. "It was massive for us to get to the next stage. We prepared well, we had a positive atmosphere, and we had the fans with us. We gave everything, but it was gone in a moment."

Needing to win its last three Group B games to reach the playoffs for the last two of Asia's automatic spots at the World Cup, the No. 101-ranked team in the world beat Iraq in Basra in March, Kuwait in Kuwait City on 5 June.

Five days later, it was leading 1-0 against Oman in Jordan in the 97th minute. —*PTI*

Botafogo beat Sounders 2-1 in Club World Cup

SEATTLE, 16 JUNE

Jair Cunha and Igor Jesus scored in the first half and Botafogo beat the Seattle Sounders 2-1 at the Club World Cup. Botafogo opened the scoring 28 minutes into the game as Cunha headed in a pass from Alex Telles. It came after a contentious yellow card to Nouhou Tolo gave the visitors a direct free kick just beyond the corner of the penalty box. Sounders players felt the call was unfair as there had been some unobserved jostling between Tolo and Artur before Tolo shoved his opponent to the ground.

Botafogo doubled the lead in the first half's final minutes with another headed goal. Vitinho connected with his 24-year-old star teammate Igor Jesus, who sent a powerful header to the bottom corner. The Sounders played better in the second half, buoyed by their energetic subs. Four minutes after coming into the match, Paul Rothrock provided the assist for Christian Roldan's header in the 75th minute that deflected off Jesus. —*PTI*

Saptak Talwar finishes at tied 63rd

BRNO, 16 JUNE

Saptak Talwar played a final round of even par 71 to finish the Raiffeisenbank Golf Challenge in tied 63rd place here.

The 26-year-old played rounds of 72, 70, 74, and 71 to finish the week with a score of three over par.

The Indian began his final round on the back nine and had bogeys on the 12th and 17th with one birdie on the 13th. He started the front nine by picking up a shot but had a double bogey on the eighth hole; however, an eagle on the ninth allowed Talwar to close the day with an even par score. —*PTI*

FRAUD IN JUNIOR CRICKET

BCCI to conduct bone test for age

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

In a significant move, the BCCI has decided to conduct an additional bone test at the junior level to ensure that no cricketer misses out on playing an extra season due to the "+1 factor" that is currently added to the calculation, which renders players ineligible by thinnest of margins.

As per the existing norms, a player undergoes a bone test for age determination via the TW3 method (test used for assessing bone age), and a +1 factor is added to determine his or her eligibility for the next season in the same age group.

PHOTO: PTI

However, with the rule change, a cricketer in the Under-16 boys' category will undergo a second bone test the following season to determine his eligibility to appear in the same age bracket in case the +1 factor rules him out in the previous year. —*PTI*

Team MGD1 finishes 5th in World Blitz Team Championship

LONDON, 16 JUNE

Team MGD1, comprising predominantly of Indian players, defeated Freedom to finish fifth in the FIDE World Blitz Team Championship, days after winning the prestigious 'Rapid' title in the tournament here. WR Chess overcame KazChess to secure their second Blitz crown since the competition began in 2023.

Team MGD1, with Grandmaster Arjun Erigiaisi on the top board, had earlier advanced to the 16-team knockout and beaten Generation XYZA 4-0 in the first round.

But the team comprising Erigaisi, P Harikrishna, David Guijarro, V. Pranav, Leon Luke Mendonca, Stavroula Tsolakidou, and Atharvaa Tayade suffered a 1-3 defeat at the hands of Hexamind Chess Team that had the likes of American GM Levon Aronian and Vidit Gujrathi among others in the quarterfinal 2-4.

The duel was decided by Hexamind's Anish Giri defeating P. Harikrishna in a tense endgame. In the fifth-place playoff, MGD1 emerged victorious, defeating Freedom in both matches 4-2.

Former world champion and deputy president of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) Viswanathan Anand said in his closing address that the World Rapid and Blitz Team Championship was a "core part" of the world body's vision to popularise the sport globally.

"A core part of our strategy has always been to forge a strong partnership between chess and the broader community, from the world of sports, business, or culture.

"Tournaments such as the World Rapid and Blitz Teams, alongside events such as the World Corporate Championship, are a shining example of this vision in action, and FIDE will continue to work hard on having more of them," said Anand, who also played in the tournament, representing the Freedom team. —*PTI*

The team of mostly Indian players bagged 5th place in a FIDE tournament today

PHOTO: @X/FIDE_CHESS

India beats Kyrgyzstan to secure bronze

UZBEKISTAN, 16 JUNE

India secured the bronze medal at the CAVA men's under-19 championship after beating Kyrgyzstan in the third-place match in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on Monday.

After the group stage round robin, India finished third out of five nations in the standings with two wins and two losses, while Kyrgyzstan came fourth with one win and three losses.

India started its campaign with a 0–3 loss to Iran, losing 16–25, 14–25, 20–25. It, however, bounced back with a 3–0 win over Kyrgyzstan 25–14, 27–25, 25–23. —*PTI*

BANK ACCOUNT FROZEN

FEI cancels equestrian events in India

NEW DELHI, 16 JUNE

In a development that will hurt the riders and the development of equestrian sport in the country, at least 24 domestic and international tournaments have been cancelled due to non-payment of dues to the world governing body, FEI, by the Equestrian Federation of India (EFI).

The EFI also needs to settle accounts for unpaid salaries, various costs of tournaments hosted in the past year, and other expenses running into almost two crore.

"EFI was supposed to pay remuneration to FEI officials for various Eventing, Show Jumping, and Dressage events held in Delhi, Meerut, and Jaipur. However, the bank has frozen the account due to different factions within the Federation claiming operational access," an EFI source told PTI.

What led to the mess?

The EFI was supposed to hold its election in September 2023, but litigations delayed the polls, following which a Committee of Administrators (CoA) was appointed by the Delhi High Court on 21 May 2024. The decision was challenged and, on May 29, the court reinstated the Executive Committee of the EFI as an interim measure, keeping in mind the participation of Indian riders in the Paris Olympics.

Events cancelled

FEI Secretary General on February 11, 2025, had written to the EFI that it was cancelling the Eventing event that was to be held on 24-28 February in Meerut.

Till 16 June 2025, EFI has lost 12 events, including a workshop on Para dressage, and is set to lose 12 more till mid-October.

These include the Para Dressage World Challenge in Bengaluru (10-12 Oct), World Dressage (8-9 Oct in Bengaluru), and FEI Jumping (CDS 24-27 Jul in Bengaluru). —*PTI*

PSG thumps Atletico Madrid 4-0 in WC opener

PASADENA, 16 JUNE

Fabian Ruiz and Vitinha scored in the first half, and Champions League winners Paris Saint-Germain opened Club World Cup play with a 4-0 victory over Atlético Madrid.

PSG largely dominated Atlético at the Rose Bowl in its first match since trouncing Inter Milan 5-0 to win its first Champions League title on 31 May.

Senny Mayulu and Lee Kang-in scored against 10-man Atlético in the second half of the European powers' meeting in front of 80,619 fans at the site of the 1994 World Cup final. The matchup was one of the highest-profile games in the group stage of the first 32-team edition of the Club World Cup, and treble-winning PSG excelled under another spotlight. Atlético's Clément Lenglet was sent off in the 78th minute with his second yellow card on a frustrating day that left Diego Simeone visibly furious at both the referees and his players' mistakes. —*PTI*